# How's Work Going?

## *Employee Survey Results Report*

MINI SURVEY

*2005*

NOVA SCOTIA
Public Service Commission
Evaluation and Audit

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Copies of this paper are available on the website of the Public Service Commission, <www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey>. Additionally, you can contact the Evaluation and Audit division of the Public Service Commission at the address below.

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Executive Summary

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report contains the results of the Government of Nova Scotia's 2005 employee mini survey. The report outlines areas of strength, areas that require immediate attention and action, gap areas, and comparison information for government. The survey report also outlines recommendations to help government respond to and act on the results, thereby enhancing government's effectiveness and service delivery to the public.

## Purpose and Objectives

The objective of this survey process is to gather information to provide government with a better understanding of the following:

- Employees' perceptions of their work environment;
- Government's areas of strength;
- Where government should focus to improve the work environment; and,
- How the results have changed over time.

This survey will inform government's attraction, recruitment, motivation and retention efforts, so it can continue to provide the highest quality of service to Nova Scotians. Specifically, the survey will provide information about:

- Whether **employees** in the Government of Nova Scotia are **engaged;**
- **Differences among employee groups** analyzed by gender, age or other demographic factors;
- Employees' **intentions to stay** with the Government of Nova

Scotia;

- **What** aspects of the work environment **employees value**; and,
- Employees' perceptions of how **government** is **meeting** their **work environment needs.**

This information assesses the effectiveness of the work environment and government's ability to engage and motivate employees, the elements which support a client-focused culture.

## Background

In 2004, the Government of Nova Scotia committed to regularly asking employees for their input about the work environment. Government conducts population surveys of all employees every four years, and mini-surveys using a representative sample group of employees in other years. The first government-wide employee survey was conducted, and its results reported, in 2004. This report outlines the results of a mini-survey that was conducted in February-March 2005.

- The survey process is led by the Evaluation and Audit division of the Public Service Commission.
- The survey was administered from February 21st to March 7th, 2005.
- A representative sample of 1,500 employees was selected to participate.
- The response rate for the survey was 58 per cent.
- The population from which the participants were selected consisted of all permanent civil servants, NSGEU Local 480 (Department of Justice, Adult Corrections) and CUPE Local 1867 (Department of Transportation and Public Works, Highway Workers) employees (8,077 employees) as of November 1, 2004.

- There were 56 questions contained in the survey, and two answer scales were included to measure the level of agreement and level of importance for each question.
- To help analyze the results, survey participants were also asked to respond to demographic questions.

## Results in Brief

### Overall Results of the 2005 Mini-Survey

This latest employee survey shows that government is making progress, and that there are areas that continue to require improvement.

- The survey shows that employees feel safe, believe they have the qualifications to meet the needs of their job and feel that the people they work with help each other out.
- In addition, employees feel that they can provide input into decisions that affect their job, talk openly with their supervisor, share work-related information within their department (including business plans) and know how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purposes. They receive recognition and feedback from their supervisor and believe their department is respectful of employees' differences.
- Areas of concern that arose in the 2004 baseline survey are reinforced this year. These include perceptions of merit-based hiring, opportunities for career advancement, and government's commitment to respond to survey concerns. In addition, managers expressed concerns regarding their ability to attract, recruit and retain qualified employees. Managers had not been previously asked this question.

As the following table demonstrates, eight areas were identified as clear strengths for the Government of Nova Scotia. These

areas should be celebrated and built upon. There were 21 areas of moderate strength that should be further strengthened, and five areas that require immediate attention and action. There are nine gap areas requiring prioritization and action.

| Interpretation | Score | Results |
|---|---|---|
| **Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon** | Favourable Scores ≥80% | **8** areas |
| **Moderate areas of strength to build upon** | Favourable Scores between 60-79% | **21** areas |
| **Areas that require immediate attention and related action** | Favourable Scores ≤40% | **5** areas |
| **Gap areas that require prioritization and action.** | Differences ≥40% between favourable and importance scores | **9** areas |

The table at the end of this executive summary outlines the frequency of favourable responses by question, and a comparison between the results of the 2004 and 2005 surveys.

## What are government's areas of strength?

Results indicated several areas of strength that government should continue to build upon and celebrate. Specifically, employees responded favourably to questions regarding safety, communication, employee involvement in work-related decisions, ability to apply training to their job, and working with people who make an effort to help each other out. In addition, over 70 per cent of respondents felt proud to work as public servants, and almost two-thirds felt they saw a future for their careers with the

Government of Nova Scotia.

***Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon***

*At least 80 per cent of employees believe:*

- *The people they work with make an effort to help each other.*
- *They can apply what they have learned in training to their job.*
- *Their department creates a safe work environment for its employees.*
- *They feel safe working in their job.*
- *They have not experienced harassment behaviour in their workplace.*
- *They know who the OHS representatives are in their work area.*
- *They have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia.*
- *They have the required qualifications to meet the needs of their job.*

## Where does government need to focus?

Consistent with results collected in the 2004 baseline employee survey, government needs to pay attention to, and act on, results related to employees' perceptions of:

- Opportunities for career-advancement;
- Merit-based hiring practices; and,
- Survey response and action.

In the 2004 employee survey, these three areas received a favourable rating of less than 40 per cent. Results have not changed in 2005 and remain areas that employees perceive as requiring immediate attention. These areas have also been identified as gaps, indicating that government is not meeting employee expectations in these areas.

In addition, this mini-survey asked managers and supervisors two new questions about their ability to attract, recruit and retain the people they need to meet their business requirements. The results had a combined favourable score of less than 40 per cent.

***Areas that require action***

*Less than 40 per cent of employees believe:*

- *They have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.*
- *That senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in the survey.*
- *That hiring is based on merit.*
- *That, as managers, they can attract and recruit the people they need in order to achieve the division/department goals.*
- *That, as managers, they can retain the people they need in order to achieve the division/department goals.*

## Trends Noted in the Survey Results

When the results are analyzed based on demographics, differences are noted in the following areas:

- Managers were more positive in their responses than employees and supervisors, although they are less likely to report that they can balance the demands of their work life with the demands of their personal life.
- Since the 2004 survey, improvements were noted within responses from employees in the 30-39 age group. In particular, employees in this age group are most likely to feel proud to work as public servants and to report they would recommend government as one of the best places to work in their community.
- Regional employees provided slightly lower favourable scores to most questions, compared to employees in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

## Have the results changed over time?

The table at the end of this executive summary outlines the percentage of favourable responses by question, and a comparison between the results of the 2004 and 2005 surveys. A

summary of the changes in results include:

***How many survey questions had changes in favourable responses from 2004 to 2005?***

**34** questions had increases in the number of favourable responses.

**6** questions had decreases in the number of favourable responses.

**3** questions had no change in the number of favourable responses.

**13** question areas were not eligible for comparisons, as 11 questions were new and two did not use the answer scale used to calculate favourable responses.

| *Interpretation* | *Score* | *2005 Results* | *2004 Results* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon** | Favourable Scores ≥80% | **8** areas | **0** areas |
| **Moderate areas of strength to build upon** | Favourable scores between 60-79% | **21** areas | **16** areas * |
| **Areas that require immediate attention and related action** | Favourable Scores ≤40% | **5** areas | **3** areas |
| **Gap areas that require prioritization and action** | Differences ≥40% between favourable and importance scores | **9** areas | **2** areas |

*Note: In the 2004 report, there were 20 areas identified as moderate strengths. The decrease to 16 areas of moderate strength in 2005 is reflective of Q2, Q13, Q22 and Q23 (benefit questions) not being included.

As the above table demonstrates:

**Clear strengths**

Eight new strengths have been identified in the 2005 mini-survey, all of which were moderate strengths in 2004.

**Moderate strengths**

The remaining eight questions noted as moderate strengths in the 2004 survey have remained moderate strengths this year.

Employees:

- Are given the opportunity to provide input into decisions that affect their job.
- Believe their supervisors consider employees' work-related ideas.
- Have access to training opportunities.
- Are provided with the tools, equipment, support, and information they need to do their jobs well.
- Are able to balance demands of work with demands of personal/family life. They have the opportunity to provide input on decisions that affect their job.
- Know how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purpose.
- Receive the communication they need to do their job well.
- Are able to talk to supervisors openly about work.

An additional eight questions moved into the moderate strength category from being categorized as areas of concern in 2004.

Employees:

- Know where they can go for help to resolve workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts.
- Receive communication about their department's business plans.
- Receive feedback from their supervisor about work performance.
- Participate in annual performance appraisal/reviews.
- Share work-related information.
- Receive recognition from supervisors.
- Are respectful of employee differences.
- See a future for their career with the Government of Nova Scotia.

Five new questions, not previously asked in the 2004 survey, were also noted as having moderate strengths.

Employees:

- Are familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Know who to contact for EAP assistance.
- Have not experienced bullying behaviour.
- Receive employee survey results.
- Are proud to be public servants.

**Areas that require attention and action**

There was an increase in the number of areas that require immediate attention. Three areas previously identified in the 2004 survey were also identified in the 2005 mini-survey. Two new areas of concern were areas requiring attention and action in the 2004 survey were identified in the 2005 mini-survey. These related to manager/supervisor's perception of their ability to attract, recruit and retain people they need in order to achieve division/department goals.

**Gap areas**

Refer to page 13 for more detail on gap areas.

## What can government learn from the survey?

### Are employees engaged?

Employee engagement looks at three overall areas: do employees understand how their work relates to government's goals and objectives, are employees motivated in their jobs, and do employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?

Results of this survey confirm the 2004 employee survey results

that most government employees are neither actively engaged nor actively disengaged in their work. It is important to note that employees who are not completely engaged could easily become disengaged.

Since an employee's engagement level is associated with work attendance and performance, a disengaged workforce could result in "...a revolving door of employees, or worse, an organization in which unmotivated employees deliver minimally-acceptable performance."[1] It is the "employees who are engaged that intend to stay with an organization, feel connected to the organization's goals and objectives, and are motivated in their jobs." [2]

Government needs to work towards making improvements in the following two areas, in order to influence employee engagement.

- Employee's understanding of how their work relates to government's goals and objectives; and,
- Employee's intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, and their concerns related to career advancement opportunities and merit-based hiring practices.

**What are the differences among employee groups based on gender, age or other demographic factors?**

The trend section on page six highlights the demographic differences.

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[1] Monica Belcourt and Simon Taggar, "Making Government The Best Place to Work", IPAC Report on Research and Roundtable discussions No. 8, 2002

[2] Parker, Owen and Wright, Liz, The Missing Link-Pay and Employee Commitment, *Ivey Business Journal*, January/February 2001

**What are employees' intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?**

This information is valuable for HR planning. The results of the survey indicate that:

- More than half of respondents under the age of 29 plan to stay with government at least 11 years.
- In the next age cohort, sixty-seven per cent of respondents aged 30-39 intend to stay for 11 years or more.
- 41 per cent of respondents aged 40-49 plan to stay for 11 years or more.
- For the 50-54 age group, 19 per cent of respondents intend to stay for 11 years or more; while 29 per cent plan to retire within the next five years.
- More than half of respondents aged 55 or older plan to retire within the next five years.

**What do employees value?**

To motivate and retain **employees** it is essential to understand what government employees **feel are important aspects** of their work environment. The survey results reveal that employees value relationships with supervisors; recognition; compensation; safety; and having the tools, support, information and qualifications to do their job. Specifically, employees rate the following statements as the most important, compared to other areas in the survey:

- I can talk openly with my supervisor about my work.
- I feel valued for my contributions at work.
- I am compensated fairly for my job.
- My department creates a safe work environment.
- I feel safe working in my job.
- I have not experienced bullying behavior in my workplace.

- I have the tools, equipment, support and information I need in order to do my job well.
- I have the required qualifications to do my job.

**Is government meeting employees' work environment needs?**

To successfully attract, motivate and retain employees, government should contribute to providing a work environment that meets the needs of employees. In the survey, nine gap areas are highlighted indicating that government may not be meeting employee needs in the following areas. (Items marked with an arrow had favourable scores of less than forty per cent.)

⇒ Opportunities for career-advancement.

- Ability to report concerns related to workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts without fear of reprisal.
- Compensation.
- Recognition (feeling valued for contributions).
- Senior leaders in departments setting a good example for employees.
- Confidence in department's senior leaders.
- Ability of supervisors to manage conflict in their workgroup.

⇒ Belief that senior management will attempt to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey.

⇒ Merit hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia.

# Next Steps and Recommendations

**Commit**

Listening to employees and acting on what is heard is a significant first step toward continuous improvement in the workplace. Annual surveys also validate the results from the baseline employee survey, help identify new issues and reinforce the need for action in areas that were previously identified. In the survey, employee's repeatedly stated:

- "Thank you for asking."
- "Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback."
- "Appreciate the opportunity and forward to the results."

Employees also expressed concer through their comments, that leaders will not try to address the issues raised in the survey. Action needs to be more clearly communicated and demonstrated.

Recommendations:

- Leaders should continue to demonstrate their commitment to listening to employees and to finding and implementing solutions.

**Assess**

The results should support an on-going internal assessment and provide government an opportunity to track its progress towards achieving goals. The results of this mini-survey can be compared to the baseline results collected in 2004, however, it should be noted that a long-term perspective should be taken when looking for trends in the data. The results of all surveys will provide

government with a longitudinal perspective that will sufficiently support trend analysis and performance tracking.

Recommendations:

- Annual performance tracking and assessments should continue to take place to enable the measurement of progress, and any other impacts.
- Performance targets should be incorporated in the 2007 employee survey.
- Survey results should support an on-going internal assessment and provide government with an opportunity to track its progress towards achieving goals.
- Government should continue to develop a model of employee engagement that identifies the critical engagement factors to be measured. This model should be incorporated into future surveys.

**Report**

Senior managers need to keep employees informed about what is happening, what they as leaders intend to accomplish, what they have achieved to date, and remind employees why their input is important. Communication should be open, honest and on-going.

Recommendations:

- The release of the results, and the response to the results should be done in a coordinated, timely, inclusive and transparent manner.
- Departments should provide regular reporting of progress to employees.
- Where appropriate, government should clearly connect actions/initiatives that address employee

concerns raised through the survey back to the survey results, so employees can see the clear link between their feedback and actions taken.

- Coordinated by a corporate advisory body, a summary progress report should be released to all employees on a semi-annual basis.

**Celebrate**

Strengths, best practices and success stories should be recognized, celebrated and shared across government.

Recommendations:

- Government should celebrate its strengths and continue to build on these areas.

**Learn**

Employee surveys draw attention to areas that employees feel are not being adequately addressed, and highlight what employees feel is important. There are times when a survey result only scratches at the surface of an issue and further exploration is required. What is the cause of this concern? Is this an awareness issue or a process issue? Is a solution starting to have an impact? Questions like these, and others, need to be addressed prior to any action planning so that there is a clear understanding of the underlying problem. Identifying root causes is critical to implementing any successful solution.

Recommendations:

- Where the issue/problem is not clear, further exploration should be conducted prior to any action planning, so that the underlying cause is understood and that the solutions will address the cause. This

approach should be clearly conveyed to employees. Activities such as brainstorming sessions, focus groups, best-practice reviews, and/or additional supplementary research, as well as employees' written survey comments, can help highlight some of the root causes of identified issues.

- Departments should engage in additional discussions with employees to provide clarification and to highlight how government might act to address the concerns reported in the employee survey.

To help managers put the recommendations in place, the Evaluation and Audit division in the PSC will produce a guide to provide tips and examples of how the results and data obtained can be analyzed and used.

**Act**

This is the most critical step in responding to the survey results. Results from the survey reinforce the need for action in areas noted in the 2004 employee survey. By analyzing the survey responses and additional comments, it appears that employees are not clear on what actions are taking place, if any, and who is responsible for action planning.

Recommendations:

- Identifying who is accountable for responding and acting upon the results, at both a corporate and department level, and how they are held accountable, should be clearly defined and communicated to employees.
- Employees and management should jointly focus on positive change and action, with employees engaged in developing solutions.

- Departments should be encouraged to act on concerns expressed in the survey and advise the Corporate Advisory Committee of key issues that require an organization-wide response or action.
- Corporately, the survey results should be integrated into the business and strategic planning process throughout government; into the *Corporate Human Resource Plan;* and into the design of new, or redesign of existing, human-resource strategies, policies, programs and services.
- Government should focus on developing solutions for the areas of concern identified in both the 2004 and 2005 surveys - employees' perceptions of:
  - Opportunities for career-advancement;
  - Merit-based hiring practices; and,
  - Survey response and action.

**Opportunities for Career-advancement/Merit-based Hiring Practices:**

When employees were asked if they saw a future for their careers with the Government of Nova Scotia, 61 per cent of respondents provided favourable responses. When employees were asked if they had opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia, only 37 per cent responded favourably. From this, we can conclude that employees perceive barriers to their opportunities for career advancement. Based on the employees' written survey comments, some of the barriers they perceive include:

- How assignments, that lead to promotional/career advancement opportunities, are assigned;
- Access to career pathing and succession management tools;

- Access to unionized positions;
- The level of internal recognition (i.e. belief that candidates from outside of government are hired for senior positions); and,
- That promotion is based solely on the employee's performance during the job interview.

Recommendations:

- Policies/guidelines should be developed and communicated to ensure fair access to developmental assignments and projects.
- Managers and supervisors should be held accountable, through performance goals, to support career development and learning plans for their employees throughout the performance-management process.
- Departments should ensure that managers and supervisors are provided with the support needed to assist employees in developing learning and career - development plans.
- Employees should be informed of available supports regarding career advancement and growth, as well as the process for succession management.
- The Public Service Commission should continue to monitor government's compliance to the fair hiring guidelines and policy. Review or audit recommendations should be reviewed and acted upon.
- Further exploration should be conducted to better understand the factors that are contributing to employees' negative perceptions of career-advancement opportunities. This survey question should be expanded to ask employees what they perceive as barriers to career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.

## Acting on the Results of the Survey

Employees' candid opinions provide valuable insight. Surveying is a significant commitment to improve the work environment. It is equally important for employees to see that their concerns are addressed by action plans that provide relevant solutions. Making improvements to the work environment will enhance employees' satisfaction with and commitment to government's effectiveness, and service delivery to the public.

Implementing the recommendations made in this report will help address employees' concerns.

**Summary of Results by Question**

| Category | Question # | 2005 % Favourable | 2004 % Favourable | Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | 1 | 85 | 72 | ✔ |
| | 2 | 56 | 54 | ✔ |
| Employee Involvement | 3 | 67 | 62 | ✔ |
| | 4 | 77 | 65 | ✔ |
| | 5 | 54 | 51 | ✔ |
| Personal Growth | 6 | 76 | 65 | ✔ |
| | 7 | 56 | 56 | No change |
| | 8 | 81 | 69 | ✔ |
| | 9 | 37 | 38 | x |
| | 10 | 53** | 58 | x |
| | 11 | 56 | - | |
| Quality of Work Life | 12 | 56 | 54 | ✔ |
| | 13 | 69 | 62 | ✔ |
| | 14 | 73 | 68 | ✔ |
| | 15 | 41 | - | |
| | 16 | 78 | - | |
| | 17 | 74 | - | |
| | 18 | 52 | - | |
| Workplace Ethics | 20 | 61 | 59 | ✔ |
| | 21 | 46 | 46 | No change |
| Safety | 22 | 83 | 69 | ✔ |
| | 23 | 87 | 71 | ✔ |
| | 24 | 81*** | 61 | ✔ |
| | 25 | 68 | - | |
| | 26 | 87 | 70 | ✔ |
| Communications | 27 | 63 | 49 | ✔ |
| | 28 | 75 | 64 | ✔ |
| | 29 | 66 | 60 | ✔ |
| | 30 | 65 | 58 | ✔ |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communications cont'd | 31 | 61 | 53 | ✔ |
| | 32 | 63 | 56 | ✔ |
| | 33 | 69 | - | |
| | 34 | 49 | - | |
| Compensation and Recognition | 35 | 42 | 48 | x |
| | 36 | 54 | 54 | No change |
| | 37 | 61 | 57 | ✔ |
| Leadership | 38 | 79 | 68 | ✔ |
| | 39 | 43**** | 46 | x |
| | 40 | 45 | 48 | x |
| | 41 | 49 | 48 | ✔ |
| | 42 | 37 | 36 | ✔ |
| Diversity | 43 | 56 | 50 | ✔ |
| | 44 | 70 | 59 | ✔ |
| | 45 | 53 | 46 | ✔ |
| Recruitment | 46 | 53 | 51 | ✔ |
| | 47 | 35 | 38 | x |
| | 48 | 87 | 71 | ✔ |
| | 49 | 95 | 78 | ✔ |
| | 50 | 33***** | - | |
| Retention | 51 | 62 | 49 | ✔ |
| | 52 | 49 | 46 | ✔ |
| | 53 | 71 | - | |
| | 54 | 49 | 47 | ✔ |
| | 55 | 36***** | - | |

- Q19 and Q56 did not use agreement-importance scales, therefore, they are not reported in this table.
- 2004 results marked with a dash (-) indicate that the question was not asked that year; therefore, there is no comparison to be made.
- ** Changed wording from "... to meet the demands of my job" to "... to meet my continuous learning needs".
- ***Changed wording from "harassment is not tolerated..." to "I have not experienced harassment (sexual, racial) behavior...".
- **** Changed wording from "...the leaders (directors and executive directors..." to "... the senior leaders (comprised of: deputy ministers, assistant/associate deputy ministers, CEOs, directors, and executive directors).
- *****These two questions targeted managers and supervisors only. Average scores are shown above.

1

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

In 2004, the Government of Nova Scotia committed to regularly asking employees for input about their work environment. This commitment is confirmed by conducting population surveys with all employees every four years, and conducting mini-surveys with a representative sample group of employees in other years. The first government-wide employee survey was conducted in February-March 2004, and the results were reported in August 2004. This report outlines the results of a mini-survey that was conducted in February-March 2005 and sent to 1,500 employees.

As a diagnostic tool, an employee survey allows government to assess the effectiveness of the work environment and its ability to engage and motivate employees. These are factors that support a client-focused culture. As with the 2004 survey, this survey measures employee perceptions in areas such as teamwork, employee involvement, personal growth, quality of work life, workplace ethics, safety, communications, compensation and recognition, leadership, diversity, and recruitment and retention. Employees are provided with opportunities to share candid input in the survey and in any follow-up action taken by their department. Strengths and opportunities for improvement identified in the survey are outlined for government to support continuous improvement.

## Conducting Employee Surveys Regularly

There are many reasons why government will survey its employees on a regular basis. Surveying regularly:

- Allows government to track its results, noting changes in opinions and trends over time, providing government with additional confidence and assurance;
- Allows government to track its results as it compares to other jurisdictions;
- Gives employees a regular opportunity to share input and opinions about their work environment via a confidential and anonymous process;
- Provides up-to-date performance information that can assist a variety of decision-making and planning activities (strategic planning, annual business planning, corporate HR planning); and,
- Supports a culture of continuous improvement and learning, by regularly collecting and reporting performance information that can be used to make improvements in the work environment.

## Purpose and Objectives

The objective of this survey process is to gather information to provide government with a better understanding of the following:

- Employees' perceptions of their work environment;
- Government's areas of strength;
- Where government should focus to improve the work environment ; and,
- How the results have changed over time.

Regular surveys, provide government with information that will help enhance its efforts to attract, recruit, motivate and retain employees, in order to provide the highest quality of service to Nova Scotians. Specifically, the survey will inform government of:

- Whether **employees** in the Government of Nova Scotia are **engaged;**
- **Differences among employee groups** analyzed by gender, age or other demographic factors;
- Employees' **intentions to stay** with the Government of Nova Scotia;
- **What** aspects of the work environment **employees value**; and,
- Employees' perceptions of how **government** is **meeting** their **work environment needs.**

This information will help government assess the effectiveness of the work environment and its ability to engage and motivate employees, which in turn supports a client-focused culture.

## How can the results of an employee survey be used?

An employee survey is a communication and management tool. The results of employee surveys communicate employees' opinions on how effective they believe the current work environment to be and relays employees' expectations by highlighting what employees feel is important. As a result, employee surveys can contribute to an understanding of perceptions and what employees consider to be important.

Understanding perceptions can guide organizational efforts to improve the quality of work life for employees. The information obtained can also be used to help inform government of what is

working, what needs adjustment and what is not working. It can inform government if an issue is government-wide or of concern for a particular demographic group (gender, age, department, etc.)

There are times when survey results only scratch the surface of an issue and further exploration is required. What is the cause of this concern? Is this an awareness issue or a process issue? Is a solution starting to have an impact? Questions like these, as examples, need to be addressed prior to any action so that there is a clear understanding of the underlying problem. Employee surveys may direct an organization to the areas that need further exploration; employees' written comments from the survey can help highlight the possible meaning behind their responses.

Results from both surveys (2004 employee survey and this mini-survey) should be integrated into the strategic planning process as the results can support an internal assessment of government human resource management. Results should be used as performance measures and indicators to monitor and track the progress of human-resources management strategies, policies, programs and services. The results will let government know if they are on track to achieve the goals in the *Corporate Human Resource Plan*, and over time, will provide a longitudinal perspective that will sufficiently support trend analysis and performance tracking.

The next table highlights the key integrated points in the strategic planning process were the employee survey results should be used.

| |
|---|
| ***Where are we now?***<br>Provides an internal assessment of how effective employees believe the current work environment is. |
| ***Where do we want to be?***<br>Information collected outlines what employees feel is important. |
| ***How do we get there?***<br>Government's action planning process. |
| ***How do we measure our progress?***<br>The results of four employee survey exercises will provide government with a longitudinal perspective that will sufficiently support trend analysis. The baseline data will be re-established every fourth year. |

## The Way Ahead

The Public Service Commission, through the Evaluation and Audit division, has been participating in an inter-jurisdictional project to develop a common model for measuring employee engagement in the Canadian public service with a common set of employee survey questions. A full proposal for a *Common Employee Engagement Measurement Tool* and process for data sharing was endorsed by Commissioners at the June 2005 PSC Commissioner's Conference. Nova Scotia will incorporate this tool and questions in our 2006 survey. Other jurisdictions, such as the Government of Alberta, will also incorporate the tool and questions into their next employee survey.

In the future, when looking at employee survey questions, we will be able to compare Nova Scotia's results to information from other Canadian public sector organizations.

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# CHAPTER TWO

# Methodology

## What questions did the 2005 mini-survey ask?

A custom-designed survey, developed by the Public Service Commission, measured employee perceptions, opinions and beliefs about the work environment. The survey consisted of 56 questions, divided into the following categories (please refer to Appendix III for a copy of the survey):

- Teamwork
- Personal growth
- Quality of work life
- Workplace ethics
- Safety
- Communications
- Compensation and recognition
- Leadership
- Diversity
- Recruitment
- Retention

Each question on the survey was followed by two Likert-type answer scales, measuring level of agreement and level of importance.

- The first scale measured level of agreement, using a five-point scale, with a sixth option for selecting "not sure/don't know". The answer scale was as follows: 5- Strongly agree; 4- Somewhat agree; 3- Neither agree nor disagree; 2-

Somewhat disagree; 1- Strongly disagree.

- The second scale measured level of importance, and used a five-point scale, as follows: 5- Critical; 4- Very important; 3- Important; 2- Somewhat important; 1- Not important.

Survey participants were asked to respond to the following request for demographic information: their department, work location, age range, years of experience with the Government of Nova Scotia, gender, educational background, diversity status, job level, and pay plan. Looking at the results organized by demographic categories, such as age groups, facilitates a greater understanding of the overall results.

## Survey Instrument Comparison, 2004-2005

Through consultations in the survey design process, a few changes were made to the survey instrument. These changes were based on requests for additional information/analyses or for clarification purposes. Specifically, in comparison to the 2004 employee survey, the following changes were made:

- Two questions directed to managers were added, to gather input regarding the manager's ability to attr ct and retain the talent they need to achieve their business goals.
- One of the original teamwork questions was removed and an additional question was added about personal growth. The new question asked employees if they felt they have had opportunities to participate in projects or assignments in their department that allow them to expand and develop their skills.
- In the safety section, a question regarding workplace bullying was added.
- In the communications section, a question was added to ask employees if they had received communications about the

results of last year's survey.

- In the leadership section, we clarified which leadership group we were referring to when asking for perceptions of whether or not leaders set a good example for employees.
- In the retention section, we asked employees if they felt proud to work as public servants.
- Two additional demographic questions were added, asking questions related to office location and educational background.

In addition to the core questions, the employee survey will include additional questions to gather information on a specific HR programs and/or services. These questions are not meant to be asked on a regular basis, and will change from year to year. The 2004 employee survey included questions regarding employees' knowledge about benefits. These were removed in the 2005 mini-survey, and replaced with three questions regarding the *Employee Assistance Program* (EAP).

## Who was included in the scope of this survey?

A representative sample of 1,500 employees was selected to participate in the survey; the participants were selected from a population of 8,077 employees as of November 1, 2004. All permanent civil servants, NSGEU Local 480 (Department of Justice, Adult Corrections) and CUPE Local 1867 (Department of Transportation and Public Works, Highway Workers) employees were included in the population.

## How was the survey administered?

The survey was administered from February 21, 2005 to March 7, 2005. Pre-survey communications, in the form of posters and

communications from the department's deputy ministers, encouraged employees to participate. The survey was administered in a paper format. Each employee in the sample received a survey package through interdepartmental mail; packages included a copy of the survey, instructions, and a stamped, addressed, return envelope. (Please refer to Appendix III for a copy of the instructions handout and survey).

## How did we analyze the survey data?

The following types of analyses were conducted with the survey data.

- Calculation of frequencies of responses and descriptive statistics (average scores, standard deviation, etc.);
- Calculation of frequencies according to demographic variables;
- Comparisons among survey items (correlations);
- Reliability assessments; and,
- Comparisons of results between the 2004 and 2005 surveys.

### 1. Favourable Scores

The following interpretation table is used to collapse the level of agreement answer scale into categories of favourable, neutral, and unfavourable responses:

| Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree or unsure | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Favourable score | | Neutral score | Unfavourable score | |

### 2. Importance Scores

The following interpretation table is used to collapse the level of importance answer scale into an importance category:

| Not important | Somewhat important | Important | Very important | Critical |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Importance score | | |

### 3. Identifying Priorities

To help government understand the results and focus its response and action efforts, we have outlined areas of strength, areas that require immediate attention and gap areas. Gap areas are areas where there are differences greater than 40 per cent between favourable and importance scores. The framework that was used is as follows.

| Interpretation | Score |
|---|---|
| Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon | Favourable Scores ≥80% |
| Moderate areas of strength to build upon | Favourable Scores between 60-79% |
| Areas that require immediate attention and related action | Favourable Scores ≤ 40% |
| Gap areas that require prioritization and action | Differences ≥40% between favourable and importance scores |

Favourable scores between 41-59 per cent should also be reviewed, but they do not form a part of our framework for prioritizing action and response efforts.

### 4. Measuring Employee Engagement

The survey examined the following three components of employee engagement:

communications from the department's deputy ministers, encouraged employees to participate. The survey was administered in a paper format. Each employee in the sample received a survey package through interdepartmental mail; packages included a copy of the survey, instructions, and a stamped, addressed, return envelope. (Please refer to Appendix III for a copy of the instructions handout and survey).

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Favourable score | | Neutral score | Unfavourable score | |

### 2. Importance Scores

The following interpretation table is used to collapse the level of importance answer scale into an importance category:

| Not important | Somewhat important | Important | Very important | Critical |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Importance score | | |

### 3. Identifying Priorities

To help government understand the results and focus its response and action efforts, we have outlined areas of strength, areas that require immediate attention and gap areas. Gap areas are areas where there are differences greater than 40 per cent between favourable and importance scores. The framework that was used is as follows:

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Favourable scores between 41-59 per cent should also be reviewed, but they do not form a part of our framework for prioritizing action and response efforts.

### 4. Measuring Employee Engagement

The survey examined the following three components of employee engagement:

- Do employees understand how their work relates to government's goals and objectives?
- Are employees motivated in their jobs?
- Do employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?

The specific questions used in the survey to measure the above factors are shown in the following chart.

| Factors of employee engagement | Specific survey questions used to measure each factor |
|---|---|
| **Employees understand how their work relates to the organization's goals.**<br><br>-Clear sense of direction and connection to organizational goals.<br><br>-Opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect their work/department. | **Q28**- I know how my work contributes to our Department's priorities/purpose.<br>**Q2**-Shared goals are developed for my workgroup.<br><br>**Q5**-I can provide input into decisions that are made. |
| **Employees are motivated in their job.**<br><br>-Opportunities to enhance job-related skills and/or knowledge to meet future needs.<br><br>-Opportunities for growth and advancement.<br><br>-Recognition received for work (other than pay and benefits).<br><br>-Improve the organization's results. | **Q6**-I have access to training opportunities.<br>**Q7**-I am encouraged to share what I have learned with others in my workgroup.<br>**Q8**-I can apply what I have learned in my training to my job.<br><br>**Q9-**I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.<br>**Q10**-I get the training and related support I need to support my continuous learning.<br><br>**Q30**-My supervisor gives me feedback about my work performance.<br>**Q37**-I receive recognition from my supervisor for a job well done.<br><br>**Q54**-I work for an effective organization; in other words, my Department regularly achieves the goals set out in our business plan. |
| **Employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia.**<br><br>-Intend to remain with their organization.<br><br>-Positively recommend their organization to others.<br><br>-See future career advancement opportunities. | **Q 52**-Even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in my community, I would stay with the Government of Nova Scotia.<br>**Q 56-**I intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia for...<br><br>**Q46-**I would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as one of the best places to work in my community.<br><br>**Q51**-I see a future for my career, working for the Government of Nova Scotia. |

**5. Jurisdictional Comparisons**

A review of jurisdictional survey activity indicated that two jurisdictions (British Columbia and Alberta) had released survey results. We did not report comparisons to their survey results for this mini-survey, instead we reported comparisons to our baseline survey that was conducted in 2004. We will, in the future, use the comparative information obtained through the use of the inter-jurisdictional *Common Employee Engagement Measurement Tool* to outline jurisdictional comparisons to our results.

## Who responded to the survey?

The target response rate for this year's survey was 40 per cent, although it was hoped that last year's response rate of 53 per cent would be matched. The actual response rate of 58 per cent surpassed expectations. Of the sample of 1,500 employees, 869 surveys were completed. The following table outlines the response rate by department:

| Department/Agency/PSE Category in the Survey | Response Rate (%) | # of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture and Fisheries | 58.2 | 46 |
| Communications Nova Scotia | 52.9 | 9 |
| Community Services | 58.3 | 105 |
| Education | 54.5 | 30 |
| Environment and Labour | 64.6 | 51 |
| Finance | 48.6 | 18 |
| Health and Office of Health Promotion | 53.8 | 64 |
| Justice | 59.1 | 127 |
| Natural Resources | 71.8 | 79 |
| Office of Economic Development | 87.5 | 14 |
| Public Prosecution Service | 54.2 | 13 |
| Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations | 54.5 | 78 |
| Tourism, Culture, and Heritage | 62.9 | 22 |
| Transportation and Public Works | 51.2 | 166 |
| Other- Category 1 (see survey) | 75.0 | 18 |
| Other- Category 2 (see survey) | 55.6 | 15 |
| Other- Category 3 (see survey) | 50.0 | 7 |
| Not Identified | | 7 |
| **TOTAL:** | **58.0** | **869** |

Transportation and Public Works is the largest department in the Government of Nova Scotia and the largest portion of our sample; it also had the largest number of respondents. The second largest department is Justice, which had the second highest number of respondents for the survey. The third largest department is Community Services, which had the third highest number of respondents. Overall, every department category achieved a response rate of at least 40 per cent. With the survey obtaining a response rate of 58 per cent, responses are accurate within 3.15 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (95% confidence). A breakdown of the respondent demographic profile can be found in *The Supplement*.

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# CHAPTER THREE

## Overall Results

The focus of this chapter is the presentation of overall results from the 2005 mini-survey. Information concerning departmental results are presented on the Public Service Commission website: <www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey>

### What were the overall results of the 2005 mini-survey?

As the table below demonstrates, eight areas were identified as clear strengths for the Government of Nova Scotia. These areas should be celebrated and further strengthened. There were 21 areas of moderate strength that should be further strengthened, and five areas that require immediate attention and action. There are nine gap areas requiring prioritization and action.

| Interpretation | Score | Results |
|---|---|---|
| **Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon** | Favourable Scores ≥80% | **8** areas |
| **Moderate areas of strength to build upon** | Favourable Scores between 60-79% | **21** areas |
| **Areas that require immediate attention and related action** | Favourable Scores ≤ 40% | **5** areas |
| **Gap areas that require prioritization and action** | Differences ≥40% between favourable and importance scores | **9** areas |

The table below outlines a summary of the percentage of favourable responses by question.
(Note: Q19 and Q56 were not scaled questions, and Q50 and Q55 were for managers and supervisors only.)

| Category | Question | % Favourable | % Neutral | % Unfavourable |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | Q1 | 85 | 4 | 10 |
| | Q2 | 56 | 17 | 23 |
| Employee Involvement | Q3 | 67 | 7 | 25 |
| | Q4 | 77 | 6 | 15 |
| | Q5 | 54 | 14 | 30 |
| Personal Growth | Q6 | 76 | 7 | 16 |
| | Q7 | 56 | 24 | 19 |
| | Q8 | 81 | 11 | 7 |
| | Q9 | 37 | 21 | 42 |
| | Q10 | 53 | 17 | 30 |
| | Q11 | 56 | 14 | 29 |
| Quality of Work Life | Q12 | 56 | 16 | 27 |
| | Q13 | 69 | 8 | 23 |
| | Q14 | 73 | 11 | 14 |
| | Q15 | 41 | 41 | 17 |
| | Q16 | 78 | 14 | 7 |
| | Q17 | 74 | 16 | 10 |
| | Q18 | 52 | 27 | 15 |
| Workplace Ethics | Q20 | 61 | 15 | 23 |
| | Q21 | 46 | 21 | 33 |
| Safety | Q22 | 83 | 6 | 10 |
| | Q23 | 87 | 6 | 7 |
| | Q24 | 81 | 5 | 12 |
| | Q25 | 68 | 7 | 25 |
| | Q26 | 87 | 7 | 6 |
| Communications | Q27 | 63 | 15 | 22 |
| | Q28 | 75 | 13 | 12 |
| | Q29 | 66 | 13 | 21 |
| | Q30 | 65 | 11 | 24 |
| | Q31 | 61 | 10 | 28 |
| | Q32 | 63 | 15 | 21 |
| | Q33 | 69 | 19 | 12 |
| | Q34 | 49 | 29 | 21 |
| Compensation and Recognition | Q35 | 42 | 9 | 49 |
| | Q36 | 54 | 13 | 33 |
| | Q37 | 61 | 12 | 27 |
| Leadership | Q38 | 79 | 6 | 15 |
| | Q39 | 43 | 29 | 25 |
| | Q40 | 45 | 22 | 32 |
| | Q41 | 49 | 18 | 31 |
| | Q42 | 37 | 30 | 32 |
| Diversity | Q43 | 56 | 27 | 16 |
| | Q44 | 70 | 15 | 14 |
| | Q45 | 53 | 32 | 14 |
| Recruitment | Q46 | 53 | 20 | 26 |
| | Q47 | 35 | 23 | 41 |
| | Q48 | 87 | 7 | 5 |
| | Q49 | 95 | 3 | 2 |
| | Q50 | 33 | 39 | 28 |
| Retention | Q51 | 62 | 18 | 19 |
| | Q52 | 49 | 21 | 31 |
| | Q53 | 71 | 17 | 11 |
| | Q54 | 49 | 31 | 18 |
| | Q55 | 36 | 42 | 23 |

## Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon

**At least 80 percent of employees believe:**

- ✓ The people they work with make an effort to help each other.
- ✓ They can apply what they have learned in training to their job.
- ✓ Their department creates a safe work environment for its employees.
- ✓ They feel safe working in their job.
- ✓ They have not experienced harassment behaviour in their workplace.
- ✓ They know who the OHS representatives are in their workplace.
- ✓ They have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia.
- ✓ They have the qualifications to meet the needs of their job.

## Moderate areas of strength

**Between 60-79 per cent of employees believe they:**

- ✓ Are given opportunities to provide input on decisions that affect their job.
- ✓ Have a supervisor that considers their work-related ideas.
- ✓ Have access to training opportunities.
- ✓ Are provided with the tools, equipment, support, and information needed to do their job well.
- ✓ Are able to balance demands of work life with demands of personal/family life.
- ✓ Are familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- ✓ Know how to contact EAP assistance.
- ✓ Know where they can go for help to resolve workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts.
- ✓ Have not experienced bullying behavior in their workplace.
- ✓ Receive communication about their department's business plans.
- ✓ Know how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purpose.
- ✓ Receive the communication they need to do their job well.
- ✓ Receive feedback from their supervisor about work performance.
- ✓ Participate in an annual performance apprarsal/review.
- ✓ Experience the sharing of work-related information within their department.
- ✓ Received employee survey results information.
- ✓ Receive recognition from their supervisors.
- ✓ Are able to talk openly with their supervisor about their work.
- ✓ Work in a department that is respectful of employees' differences.
- ✓ See a future for their career working for the Government of Nova Scotia.
- ✓ Are proud to be a public servant.

**Areas that require action**

**Fewer than 40 per cent of respondents believe:**

- They have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.
- That senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in the survey.
- That hiring is based on merit.
- As managers, they can attract and recruit the people they need in order to achieve the division/department goals.
- As managers, they can retain the people they need in order to achieve the division/department goals.

# Summary of Overall Results by Category

This section highlights areas of strength and areas that require action, by survey category.

## Teamwork

Teamwork has an area of clear strength for government.

- 85 per cent of respondents report that the people they work with make an effort to help each other.

## Employee Involvement

There were two areas of moderate strength for government in the area of employee involvement.

- 67 per cent of respondents feel they have an opportunity to provide input into decisions that affect their job.
- 77 per cent believe that their supervisor considers their work-related ideas.

## Personal Growth

An area of clear strength and an area of moderate strength for government can be found in the area of personal growth.

- 77 per cent of respondents feel they have access to training opportunities.

- 81 per cent feel that they can apply what they learn in training to their jobs.

Within the personal growth section there was a gap area and an area that required attention and action from government:

- 37 per cent of respondents feel they have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia. This result is consistent with the results collected in the 2004 baseline employee survey.

### Quality of Work Life

There are four areas of moderate strength for government in the area of quality of work life.

- 69 per cent of respondents feel they have the tools, equipment, support and information they need to do their jobs well.
- 73 per cent of respondents feel they can balance the demands of their work and personal life.
- 78 per cent of respondents report they are familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- 74 per cent of respondents report they know how to contact EAP for assistance.

### Workplace Ethics

Workplace ethics has an area of moderate strength for government.

- 61 per cent of respondents report knowing where to go for help (the process) for resolving workplace ethical concerns or

dilemmas.

There is also a gap area regarding employee perceptions of their ability to report ethical concerns or dilemmas without fear of reprisal. Forty-six per cent of respondents agreed with the statement; ninety-two per cent felt it was important.

## Safety

Questions about safety resulted in four areas of clear strength and one area of moderate strength for government.

- More than 80 per cent of respondents feel their department creates a safe work environment, feel safe working in their jobs, have not experienced harassment in their workplace, and know who the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) representatives are for their workplace.
- 68 per cent of respondents feel they have not experienced bullying behavior in the workplace.

## Communication

Communication is an area of moderate strength for government.

- More than 60 per cent of respondents feel they received communications about their department's business plan in the past twelve months, know how their work contributes to the department, receive the communications they need to do their jobs well and feel that information is shared within their department.

- More than 60 per cent of respondents also feel they receive feedback from their supervisors about their work performance and they participate in an annual performance review/ appraisal with their supervisors.

## Compensation and Recognition

Compensation and recognition has an area of moderate strength.

- 61 per cent of respondents feel they receive recognition from their supervisors for a job well done.

There are two gap areas in this category that require attention and action:

- 42 per cent of respondents feel they are compensated fairly for their jobs.
- 54 per cent feel valued for their contributions at work.

## Leadership

An area of moderate strength in leadership is found in employees' input about their supervisors. Almost eighty per cent of respondents feel that they can talk openly with their supervisors about their work.

There are four gaps in the area of leadership that respondents feel need improvement:

- Confidence in their department senior leaders.
- Senior leaders setting a good example for staff.

- Senior managers commitment to resolving issues raised by employees in the survey, (this was also identified as an area that required immediate attention and related action.)
- Supervisors managing conflict within their workgroups.

## Diversity

Government has an area of moderate strength with regard to diversity.

- 70 per cent of respondents feel that employees in their department are respectful of employee differences.

## Recruitment

There are two areas of strength related to recruitment.

- 87 per cent of employees feel they have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia.
- 95 per cent feel that they have the required qualifications to meet the demands of their job.

There are two areas that require immediate attention and action. Of these areas, perceptions of merit-based hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia was also a gap area.

- 35 per cent of respondents believe hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia is based on merit.
- 39 per cent of managers and twenty-eight per cent of supervisors agreed that they can attract and recruit the people they need to meet their business requirements.

## Retention

There are two areas of moderate strength related to retention for government.

- 62 per cent of respondents agreed that they saw a future for their career with the Government of Nova Scotia.
- 71 per cent of respondents feel proud to work as public servants.

There is also an area of concern around the issue of retention.

- Forty-one per cent of managers and thirty per cent of supervisors feel that they can retain the people they need to meet their business requirements

## Trends Noted in the Survey Results

When the results are analyzed based on demographics, differences are noted in the following areas:

- Managers were more positive in their responses than employees and supervisors, although respondents from the management group is less likely to report that they can balance the demands of their work life with the demands of their personal life.
- Since the 2004 survey, improvements were noted within responses from employees in the 30-39 age group. In particular, this group of employees are most likely to feel proud to work as public servants and to report they would recommend government as one of the best places to work in their community.
- Regional employees provided slightly lower favourable scores to most questions, compared to employees in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

For further details about demographic differences, please review Chapter Four.

# How do the results compare to the baseline results collected in 2004?

***How many survey questions had changes in favourable responses from 2004 to 2005?***

**34** questions had increases in the number of favourable responses.

**6** questions had decreases in the number of favourable responses.

**3** questions had no change in the number of favourable responses.

**13** question areas were not eligible for comparisons, as 11 questions were new and two did not use the answer scale used to calculate favourable responses.

The table on the next page outlines the frequency of favourable responses, by question, and is compared to results from the 2004 baseline employee survey.

## Summary of Results by Question

| Category | Question # | 2005 % Favourable | 2004 % Favourable | Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | 1 | 85 | 72 | ✔ |
| | 2 | 56 | 54 | ✔ |
| Employee Involvement | 3 | 67 | 62 | ✔ |
| | 4 | 77 | 65 | ✔ |
| | 5 | 54 | 51 | ✔ |
| Personal Growth | 6 | 76 | 65 | ✔ |
| | 7 | 56 | 56 | No change |
| | 8 | 81 | 69 | ✔ |
| | 9 | 37 | 38 | x |
| | 10 | 53** | 58 | x |
| | 11 | 56 | - | |
| Quality of Work Life | 12 | 56 | 54 | ✔ |
| | 13 | 69 | 62 | ✔ |
| | 14 | 73 | 68 | ✔ |
| | 15 | 41 | - | |
| | 16 | 78 | - | |
| | 17 | 74 | - | |
| | 18 | 52 | - | |
| Workplace Ethics | 20 | 61 | 59 | ✔ |
| | 21 | 46 | 46 | No change |
| Safety | 22 | 83 | 69 | ✔ |
| | 23 | 87 | 71 | ✔ |
| | 24 | 81*** | 61 | ✔ |
| | 25 | 68 | - | |
| | 26 | 87 | 70 | ✔ |
| Communications | 27 | 63 | 49 | ✔ |
| | 28 | 75 | 64 | ✔ |
| | 29 | 66 | 60 | ✔ |
| | 30 | 65 | 58 | ✔ |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communications cont'd | 31 | 61 | 53 | ✔ |
| | 32 | 63 | 56 | ✔ |
| | 33 | 69 | - | |
| | 34 | 49 | - | |
| Compensation and Recognition | 35 | 42 | 48 | x |
| | 36 | 54 | 54 | No change |
| | 37 | 61 | 57 | ✔ |
| Leadership | 38 | 79 | 68 | ✔ |
| | 39 | 43**** | 46 | x |
| | 40 | 45 | 48 | x |
| | 41 | 49 | 48 | ✔ |
| | 42 | 37 | 36 | ✔ |
| Diversity | 43 | 56 | 50 | ✔ |
| | 44 | 70 | 59 | ✔ |
| | 45 | 53 | 46 | ✔ |
| Recruitment | 46 | 53 | 51 | ✔ |
| | 47 | 35 | 38 | x |
| | 48 | 87 | 71 | ✔ |
| | 49 | 95 | 78 | ✔ |
| | 50 | 33***** | - | |
| Retention | 51 | 62 | 49 | ✔ |
| | 52 | 49 | 46 | ✔ |
| | 53 | 71 | - | |
| | 54 | 49 | 47 | ✔ |
| | 55 | 36***** | - | |

- Q19 and Q56 did not use agreement-importance scales; therefore, they are not reported in this table.
- 2004 results marked with a dash (-) indicate that the question was not asked that year; therefore, comparisons cannot be made.
- ** Changed wording from "... to meet the demands of my job" to "... to meet my continuous learning needs".
- ***Changed wording from "harassment is not tolerated..." to "I have not experienced harassment (sexual, racial) behavior ...".
- **** Changed wording from "...the leaders (directors and executive directors..." to "... the senior leaders (comprised of: deputy ministers, assistant/associate deputy ministers, CEOs, directors, and executive directors).
- ***** These two questions targeted managers and supervisors only; they are average scores.

*The Supplement* provides a detailed breakdown of responses by question.

The table below provides a summary of comparison information from the 2004 and 2005 surveys.

| *Interpretation* | *Score* | *2005 Results* | *2004 Results* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon** | Favourable Scores ≥80% | **8** areas | **0** areas |
| **Moderate areas of strength to build upon** | Favourable scores between 60-79% | **21** | **16** areas |
| **Areas that require immediate attention and related action** | Favourable Scores ≤ 40% | **5** areas | **3** areas |
| **Gap areas that require prioritization and action** | Differences ≥40% between favourable and importance scores | **9** areas | **2** areas |

*Note: In the 2004 report, there were 20 areas identified as moderate strengths. This number decreased to 16 areas of moderate strength in 2005 due to Q2, Q13, Q22 and Q23 (benefit questions) not being included.

**Clear strengths**

There is an increase in the number of areas identified as clear strengths to celebrate and build upon; eight new strengths have been identified in the 2005 mini-survey. All eight clear strengths were identified as moderate strengths in 2004. Refer to the chart on page 39.

**Moderate strengths**

The remaining eight questions noted as moderate strengths in the 2004 survey have remained moderate strengths this year:

Employees:

- Are given the opportunity to provide input into decisions that affect their job.
- Believe their supervisors consider employees' work-related ideas.
- Have access to training opportunities.
- Are provided with the tools, equipment, support, and information they need to do their jobs well.
- Are able to balance demands of work with demands of personal/family life. They have the opportunity to provide input on decisions that affect their job.
- Know how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purpose.
- Receive the communication they need to do their job well.
- Are able to talk to supervisors openly about work.

An additional eight questions moved into the moderate strength category from being categorized as an area of concern in 2004.

Employees:

- Know where they can go for help to resolve workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts.
- Receive communication about their department's business plans.
- Receive feedback from their supervisor about work performance.
- Participate in annual performance appraisal/reviews.
- Share work-related information.

- Receive recognition from supervisors.
- Are respectful of employee differences.
- See a future for their career with the Government of Nova Scotia.

Five new questions, not previously asked in the 2004 survey, were also noted as having moderate strengths.

Employees:

- Are familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Know who to contact for EAP assistance.
- Have not experienced bullying behavior.
- Receive employee survey results.
- Are proud to be a public servant.

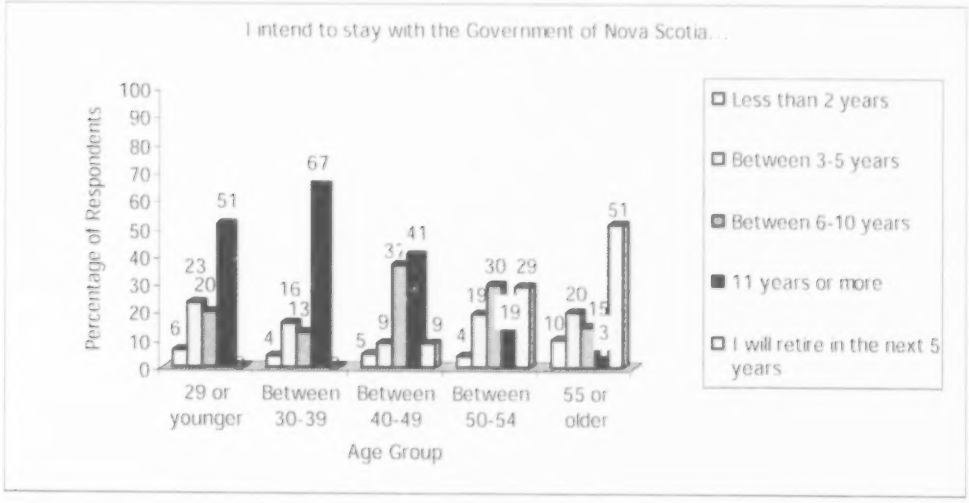
**Areas that require attention and action**

There was an increase in the number of areas that require immediate attention. Three areas previously identified in the 2004 survey were also identified in the 2005 mini-survey. Two new areas of concern were areas requiring attention and action in the 2004 survey were identified in the 2005 mini-survey (perceptions of merit-based hiring, career advancement opportunities and action in response to the survey results). These related to manager/supervisor's perception of their ability to attract, recruit and retain people they need in order to achieve division/department goals.

# How long do employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?

More than half of respondents under the age of 29 plan to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia for at least 11 years. In the next age cohort, 30-39, the percentage climbs to sixty-seven.

Forty-one per cent of respondents aged 40-49 plan to stay for 11 years or more as do 19 per cent of respondents aged 50-54. More than half of respondents aged 55 or older plan to retire within the next five years; another 29 per cent between the ages of 50-54 plan to retire within the next five years.



# What do employees value as important aspects of their work environment?

Employees rate the following statements as **most** important, compared to other areas in the survey:

- I can talk openly with my supervisor about my work.
- I feel valued for my contributions at work.
- I am compensated fairly for my job.
- My department creates a safe work environment.
- I feel safe working in my job.
- I have not experienced bullying behavior in my workplace.
- I have the tools, equipment, support and information I need in order to do my job well.
- I have the required qualifications to do my job.

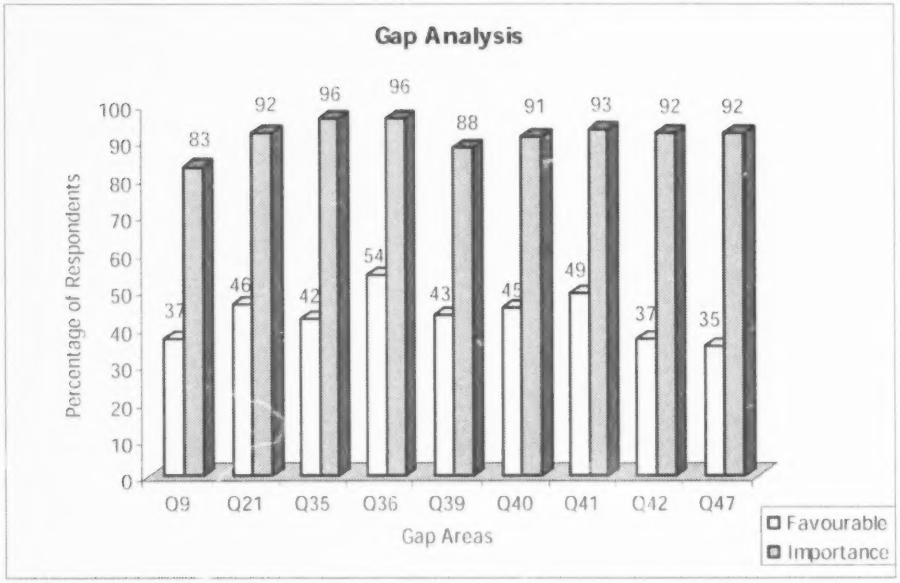
Statements rated by employees as **least** important are:

- My work environment is supportive of my involvement in community/volunteer activities.
- I received communications about our department's business plan in the past 12 months.
- I received communications about the results of last year's government-wide employee survey.
- I am aware of government's corporate values.
- I am encouraged to share what I have learned in training with others in my workgroup.
- All EAP questions.

# Are we meeting the work environment needs of our employees?

A gap analysis, examining the differences between favourable and importance ratings, can identify areas that require attention and action. The following areas produced the largest gaps (gaps in excess of 40 per cent, with importance ratings being at least 40 per cent higher than the favourable scores), indicating that government is not meeting employees' needs in these areas:

- I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia. (Q9)
- I can report concerns related to workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts without fear of reprisal. (Q21)
- I am compensated fairly for my job. (Q35)
- I feel valued for my contributions at work. (Q36)
- The senior leaders in my department set a good example for employees. (Q39)
- I have confidence in my department's senior leaders. (Q40)
- My supervisor manages conflict in my workgroup. (Q41)
- Senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey. (Q42)
- Hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia is based on merit. (Q47)




# Are employees in the Government of Nova Scotia engaged?

Results of this mini employee survey confirm the 2004 employee survey results indicating most government employees are neither actively engaged, nor are they actively disengaged in the work environment. The following results have been used to assess this level of engagement.

**Do employees know how their work contributes to the department?**

There have been slight improvements in employees' understanding of how their work contributes to the organization.

- More than two-thirds of respondents understand how their work contributes to the priorities and purpose of their departments.

Employees feel positive about employee involvement in their workgroups, but less so regarding involvement at the department level.

- More than two-thirds of respondents believe they have opportunities to provide input on decisions that affect their job.

- More than three-quarters of respondents report that their supervisor considers their work-related ideas.

- More than half of respondents agree that they can provide input into decisions that are made in their department.

**Are employees motivated to help the organization succeed?**

Employees feel that they have access to training opportunities and can apply that training to their jobs.

- Half of respondents feel that they are encouraged to share what they have learned with others in their workgroup, get the training and related support they need to meet their continuous learning needs, and have opportunities to participate in assignments/projects in their department that allow them to expand and develop new skills.

- More than one-third of respondents feel that they have opportunities for career advancement within the government.

- Two-thirds of respondents feel they receive recognition from their supervisor for a job well done.

- Two-thirds of respondents report favourable scores regarding receiving feedback from their supervisors.

- Less than half of respondents feel that they work for an effective organization.

**Do employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?**

When examining employee's intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, results show that:

- More than half of respondents under the age of 29 plan to stay with Government for 11 years or more.

- 67 per cent of respondents between the ages of 30-39 intend to stay for 11 years or more.

- 41 per cent of respondents aged 40-49 plan to stay for 11 years or more, while 19 per cent of employees aged 50-54 plan to stay for 11 years or more.

- More than half of respondents aged 55 or older plan to retire, while 29 per cent between the ages of 50-54 plan to retire within the next five years.

The scores are relatively unchanged when employees were asked if they would recommend the organization to others.

- Slightly more than half of respondents felt that they would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as one of the best places to work in their community.

- Slightly fewer than half of respondents agreed that they would stay with the government if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in their community.

- Approximately one-third of respondents agree that they have opportunities for career advancement within the government.

Based on these and the 2004 employee survey results, indications are that the government work environment does not completely engage employees. For further conclusions about employee engagement, please refer to Chapter Five.

## What correlations have been noted in the survey results?

Correlation analysis indicates that there is a strong relationship among compensation, employee involvement, personal growth and leadership questions. As an example, favourable responses for questions on personal growth may result in favourable responses for leadership questions. To translate this information into action, if action is targeted to the area of personal growth, favourable responses for this area, as well as in perceptions of leadership, may be achieved. *The Supplement* provides additional details regarding correlations.

# What were the results of the survey's reliability assessments?

Reliability assessments were conducted for the answer scales used in the survey. Using Cronbach's alpha measure, the reliability assessment generated results in excess of 0.6 which indicates that the survey is reliable.

As stated in Chapter Two, with a response rate of 58 per cent and 869 returned surveys, results are considered accurate within 3.15 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (95 per cent confidence).

# CHAPTER FOUR

## Detailed Results by Category

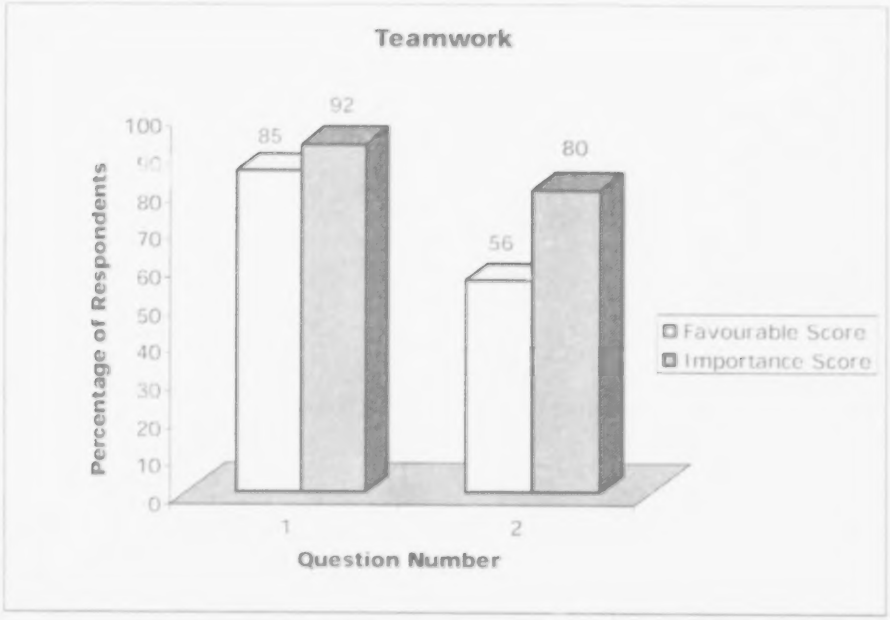
In this chapter, we have outlined the following detailed survey results by category.

- Favourable scores by question.
- Differences within demographic groups are highlighted.[1]
- Importance scores by question.
- Comparisons to 2004 survey results by question.

(NOTE: due to rounding of numbers, the totals in some graphs/charts may not equal 100 per cent within each section.)

[1] Differences greater than 10 per cent are highlighted.

# Teamwork



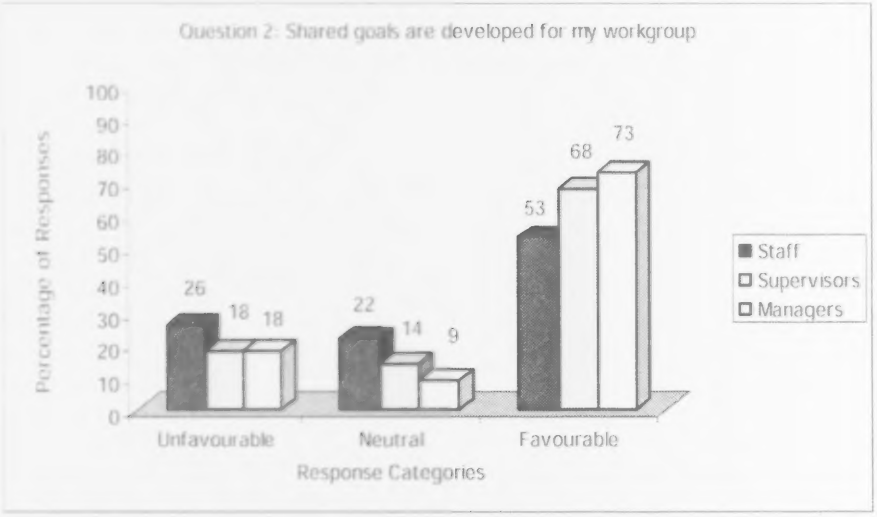

Question 1: The people I work with make an effort to help each other out
Question 2: Shared goals are developed for my workgroup

**Favourable Scores**

Employees feel positive about teamwork in their workgroups; more than 80 per cent of respondents feel that the people they work with make an effort to help each other. However, there was a drop in the number of favourable responses when asked if shared goals were developed for their workgroups, with just slightly more than half of respondents agreeing. In further detail:

- Managers are more likely to agree that shared goals were developed for their workgroups; employees are less likely to feel that way.

- MCP, PR, and AS employees are more likely to state that shared goals were developed for their workgroups; CUPE and Corrections staff are less likely to agree.

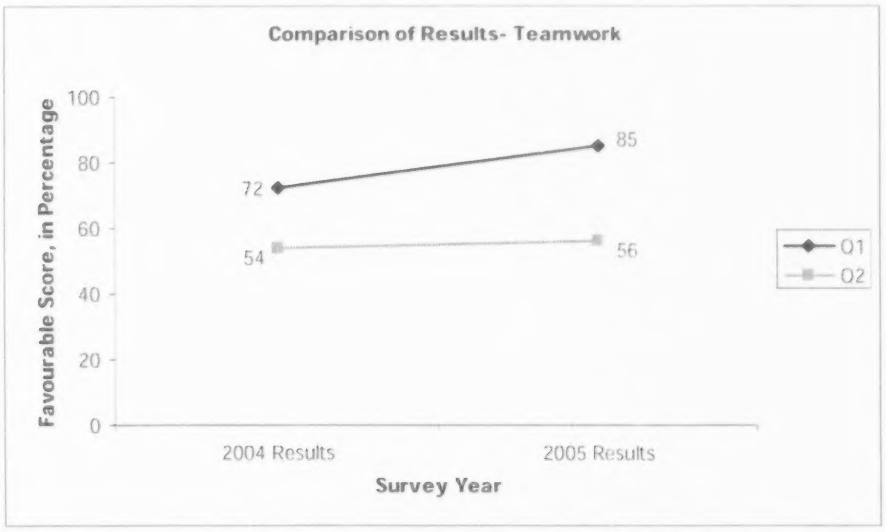



Please refer to *Appendix I* for a summary of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

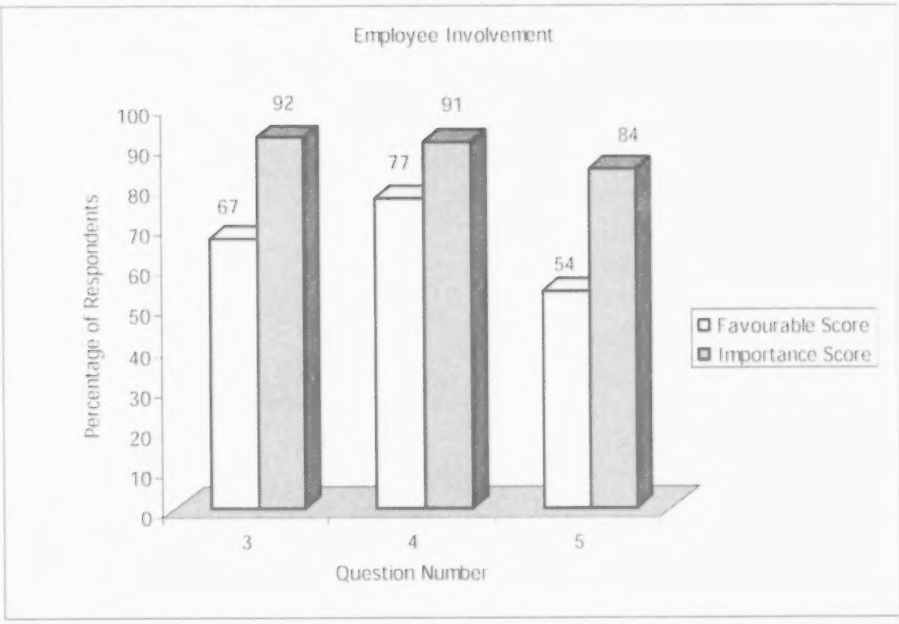
Teamwork is an important component to the work environment; 92 per cent of respondents feel that it is important for coworkers to make an effort to help each other out. Eighty per cent of respondents feel it is important to have shared goals developed within their workgroups.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




As the graph demonstrates, there was an increase in the number of respondents who reported favourable scores in the area of teamwork. When comparing 2005 survey results to results from last year's survey, there was more than a 10 per cent increase in favourable scores regarding coworkers making an effort to help each other out since last year.

# Employee Involvement




Question 3: I am given an opportunity to provide input on decisions that affect my job
Question 4: My supervisor considers my work-related ideas
Question 5: I can provide input into decisions that are made in my Department

**Favourable Scores**

Employees feel positive about employee involvement in their workgroups.

- More than two-thirds of respondents were positive regarding opportunities to provide input on decisions that affect their job.

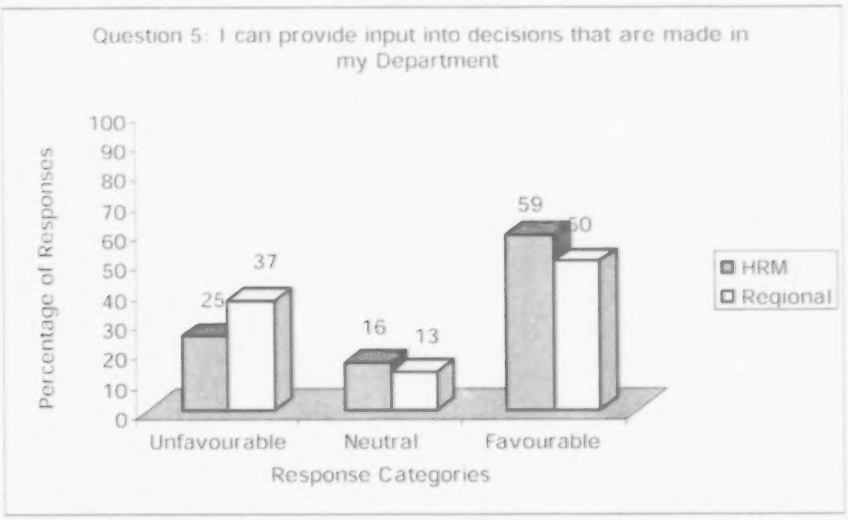
- More than three-quarters of respondents report that their supervisor considers their work-related ideas. There is a drop in the number of favourable responses when asked if employees have opportunities to provide input into decisions that are made in their department—54 per cent of

respondents agreed.

In further detail:

- Managers were more likely to feel that they could provide input into decisions that are made in the departments; employees were less likely to feel that way.

- There was an approximate 10 per cent reduction in favourable responses from regional staff, compared to staff in the Halifax Regional Municipality.




Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

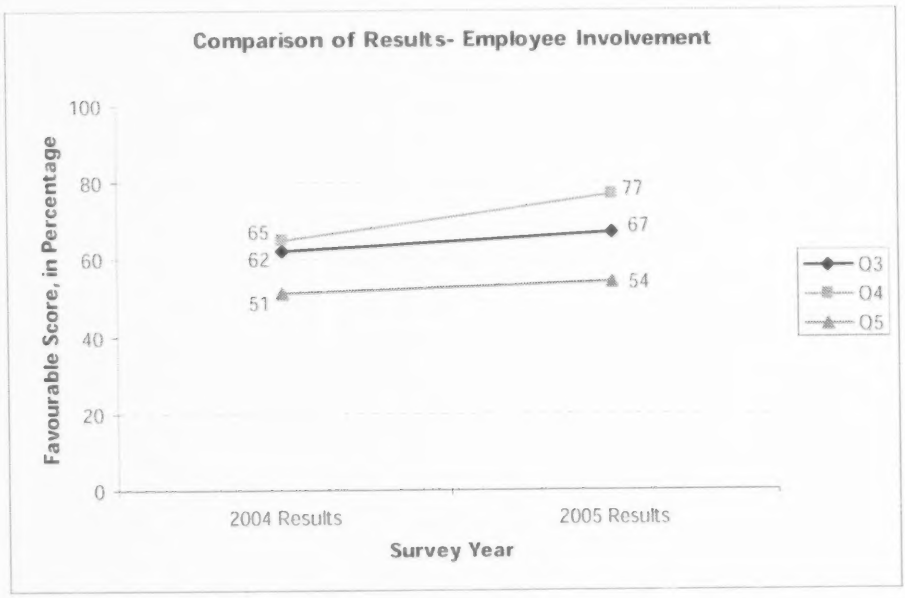
**Importance Scores**

Employee involvement is very important for employees.

- Over 90 per cent of respondents want to provide input into decisions that affect their job and to have a supervisor that considers their work-related ideas.

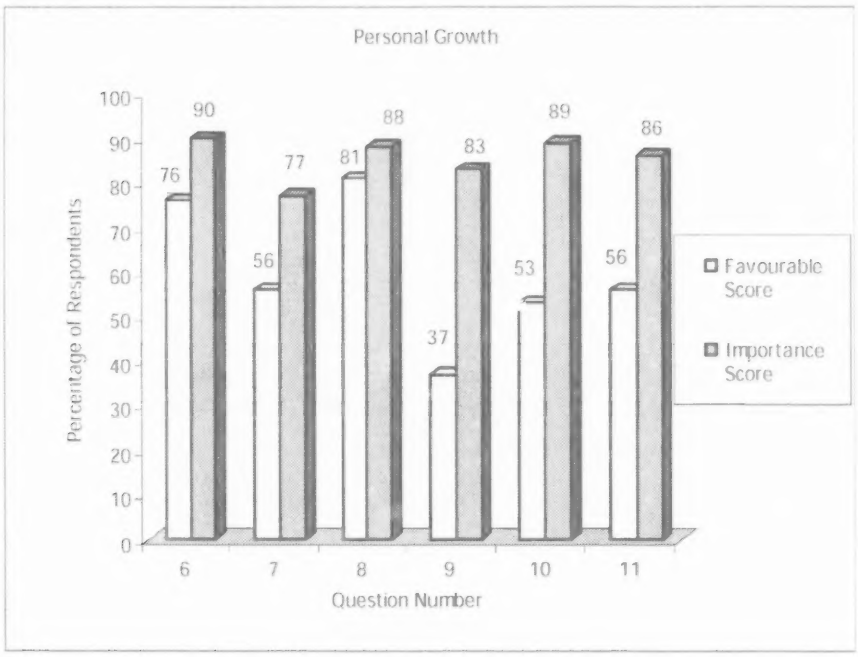
- Over 80 per cent of respondents feel it is important to be able to provide input into decisions that are made in the department.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




As the graph demonstrates, there is an increase in favourable results in the area of employee involvement. Since the 2004 survey, an additional 10 per cent of respondents believe they can provide input into decisions that affect their jobs.

# Personal Growth




Question 6: I have access to training opportunities

Question 7: I am encouraged to share what I have learned with others in my workgroup

Question 8: I can apply what I have learned in my training to my job

Question 9: I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia

Question 10: I get the training and related support I need to support my continuous learning

Question 11: I have opportunities to participate in assignments/projects in my department that allow me to expand and develop new skills

**Favourable Scores**

Personal growth questions generated mixed responses from respondents:

- Respondents feel that they have access to training opportunities and can apply what they have learned in training to their jobs.

- Slightly more than half of respondents feel that they are encouraged to share what they have learned with others in their workgroup, get the training and related support they need to meet their continuous learning needs, and have opportunities to participate in assignments/projects in the department that allow them to expand and develop new skills.

- Slightly more than one-third of respondents agree that they have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.

In further detail:

- Regional staff are less likely to report having opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia (30 per cent of respondents compared to 44 per cent of respondents in the Halifax Regional Municipality).

- Employees with two to five years of experience with the Government of Nova Scotia are most likely to feel they have opportunities to participate in assignments and projects in their department to expand and develop new skills.

- Managers report the highest levels of favourable responses to questions regarding personal growth, compared to employees and supervisors. Managers were more likely to feel they have opportunities for career advancement; employees and supervisors reported similar levels of agreement to this question with a reduction of approximately 25 per cent compared to manager responses.

- MCP and AS employees are more likely to feel that they have opportunities for career advancement; TE, CUPE and employees in the other pay plan grouping are less likely to

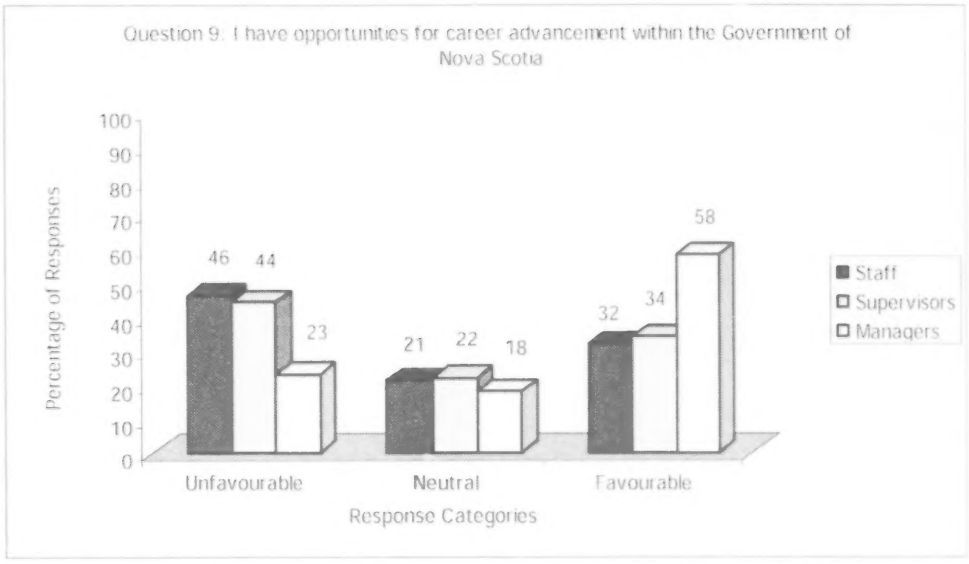
feel they have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.

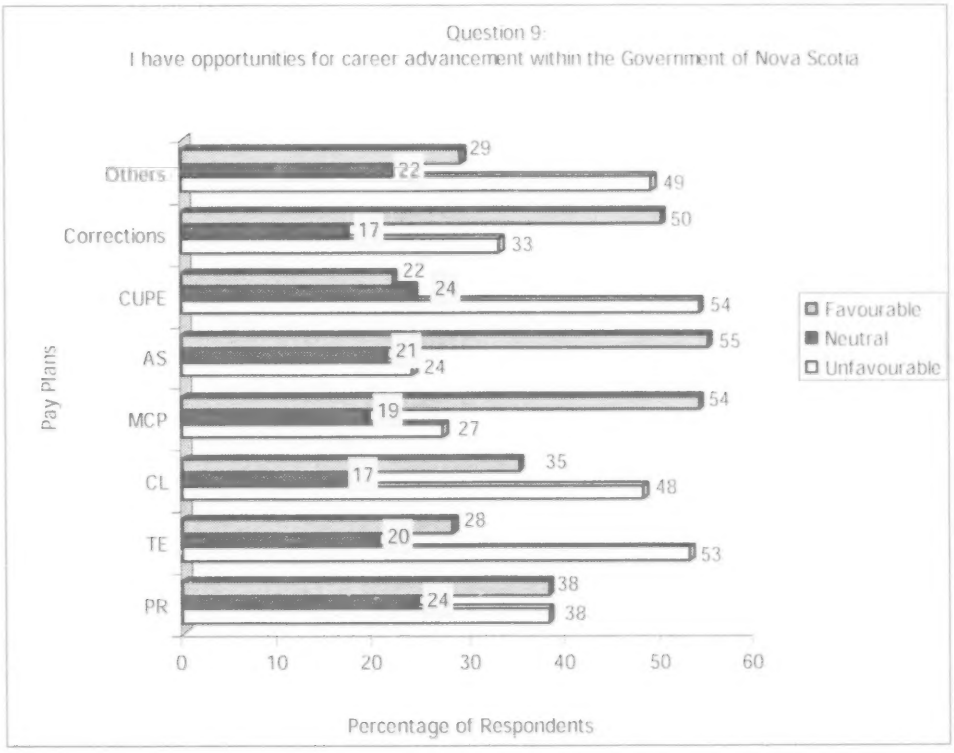
- Correctional staff, MCP and AS employees are more likely to feel they received the training to support their continuous learning needs than other pay plan groups.

- Younger respondents (39 and younger) provide higher favourable scores regarding career advancement opportunities within the government compared to other age groups.

- Younger respondents (39 and younger) also report high favourable scores regarding opportunities to participate in assignments/projects in their department that allow them to develop and expand their skills.

- Respondents with post-secondary education report higher favourable scores regarding opportunities for career advancement within the government.


Question 9: I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia
Percentage of Responses
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
46
44
23
21
22
18
32
34
58
Staff
Supervisors
Managers
Unfavourable
Neutral
Favourable
Response Categories


Question 9:
I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia
Pay Plans
Others
29
22
49
Corrections
50
17
33
CUPE
22
24
54
AS
55
21
24
MCP
54
19
27
CL
35
17
48
TE
28
20
53
PR
38
24
38
Favourable
Neutral
Unfavourable
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
Percentage of Respondents

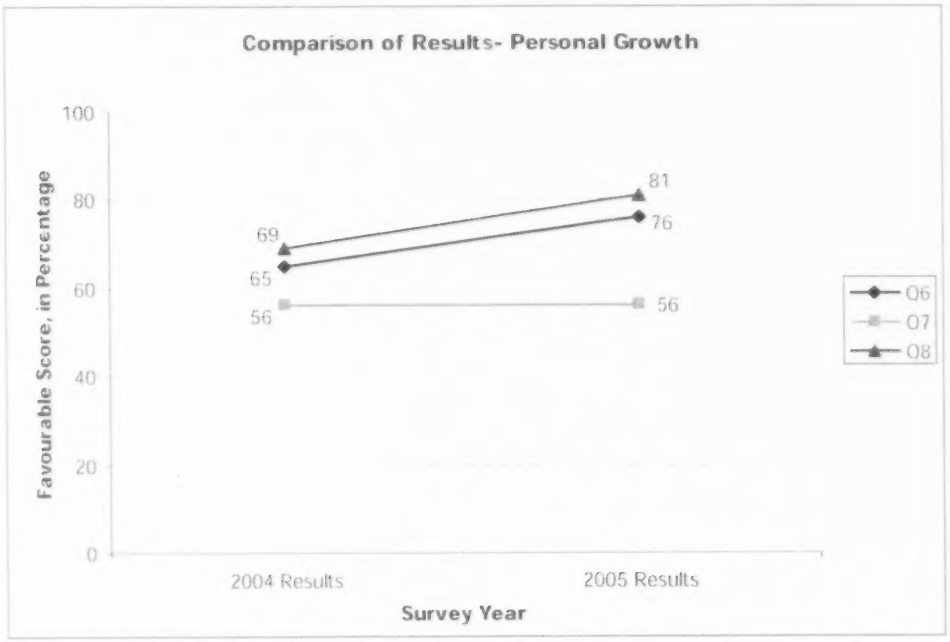
Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

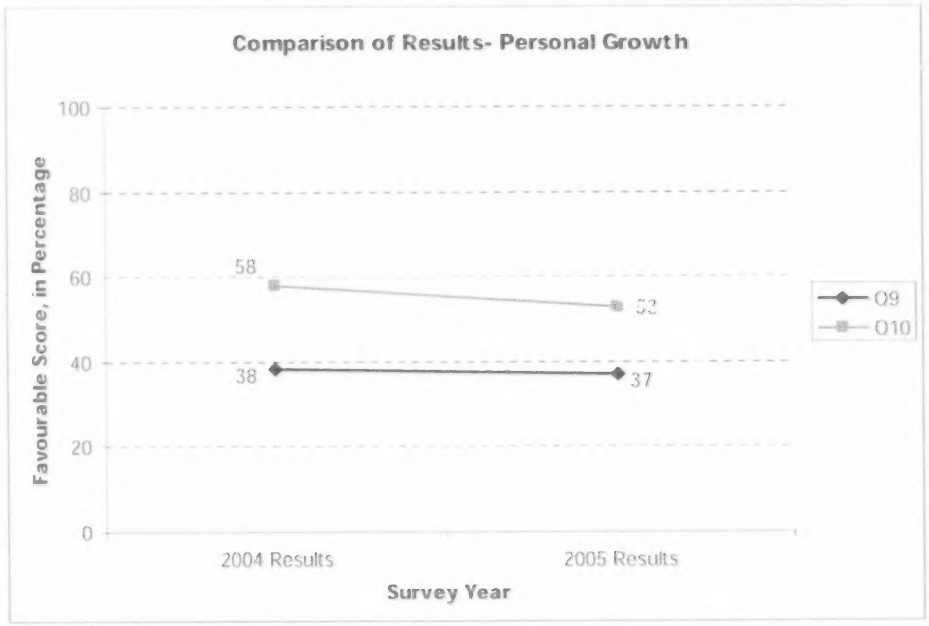
**Importance Scores**

According to the survey results, personal growth is an important factor in the government work environment. More than 80 per cent of respondents feel that having access to training opportunities, being encouraged to apply what they have learned and sharing that learning with coworkers are important. In addition, eighty per cent also believe that having opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia and opportunities to participate in projects/assignments in their department to develop and expand skills, and getting training in support of continuous learning needs, are important.

It is noteworthy that employee perceptions of career advancement opportunities in the Government of Nova Scotia was identified as a critical gap area in the survey results; there was a difference greater than 40 per cent between level of agreement and level of importance for this question.

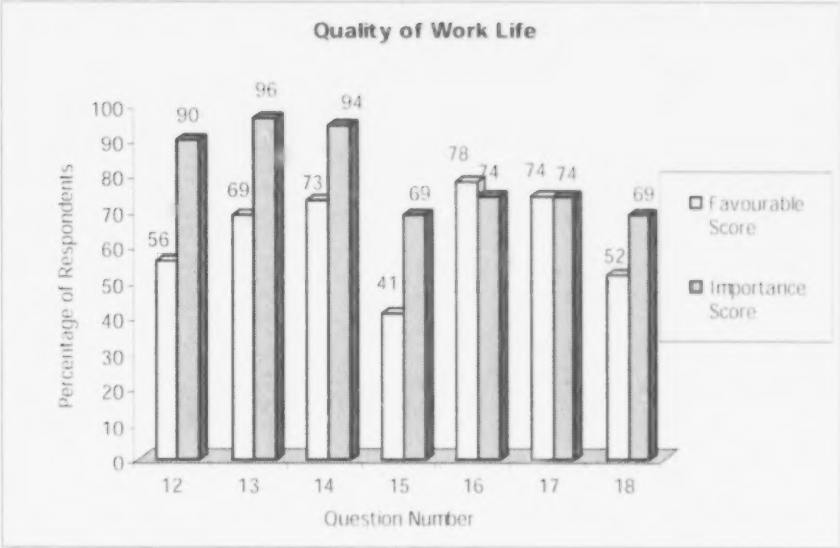
**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**



When comparing results from the baseline survey of 2004 and the mini-survey of 2005, we note that there are two areas where the number of favourable responses increased and three areas where there were slight declines in the number of favourable responses. Specifically, respondents reported favourable scores for feeling they can apply what they have learned in training to their jobs, and that they have access to training opportunities. Respondents were less positive about career-advancement opportunities, receiving support to meet continuous-learning needs, and feeling encouraged to share what they have learned with others in their workgroup.

# Quality of Work Life




Question 12: I am provided with support to balance my work and personal/family life

Question 13: I have the tools, equipment, support and information I need to do my job well

Question 14: I can balance the demands of my work life with the demands of my personal/family life

Question 15: My work environment is supportive of my involvement in community/volunteer activities

Question 16: I am familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Question 17: I know how to contact EAP for assistance

Question 18: I would feel comfortable using EAP services

**Favourable Scores**

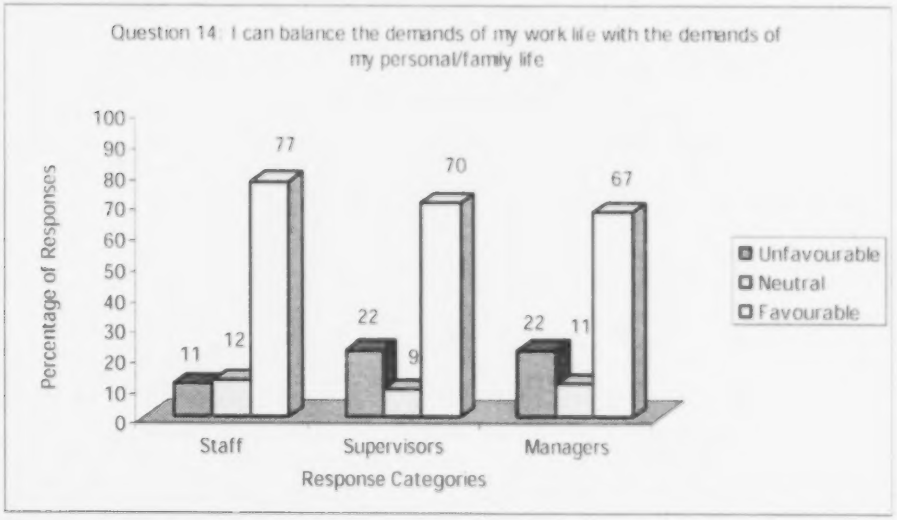
Quality of work life questions, such as questions around work-life balance, generated mixed responses from respondents. Respondents felt they can balance the demands of their work and personal/family life, but that they didn't necessarily receive the support they needed to balance their work and personal/family life. Slightly more than 40 per cent of respondents felt that their work environment was supportive of their community/volunteer activities.

Of the Employee Assistance Program questions that were asked, more than two-thirds of respondents said they are familiar with the program and know who to contact for assistance, yet only slightly half of respondents said they would feel comfortable using their services.

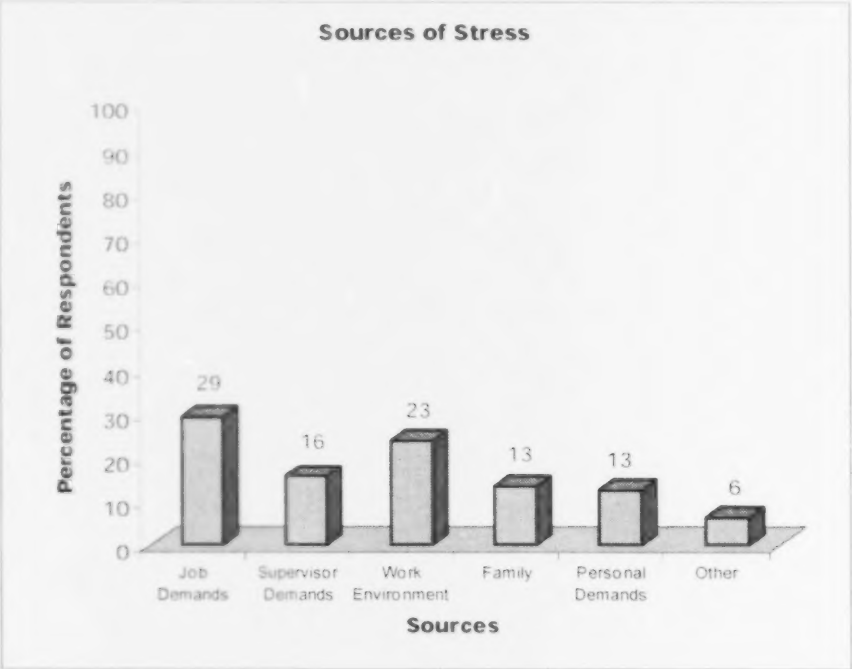
In further detail:

- Managers are less likely to report favourable scores when asked if they could balance their work and personal/family life. Managers and supervisors report similar levels of unfavourable scores when asked if they could achieve work life balance.

- Younger respondents are less likely to agree that they were familiar with the EAP, know how to contact EAP, and feel comfortable using EAP services.



When asked, in question 19, what were the sources of stress for employees, respondents selected the following responses.




Of those who responded, almost 30 per cent identified job demands, followed by work environment, and supervisor demands as the top sources of stress. Personal demands, family, and other sources were also identified as additional sources of stress.

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

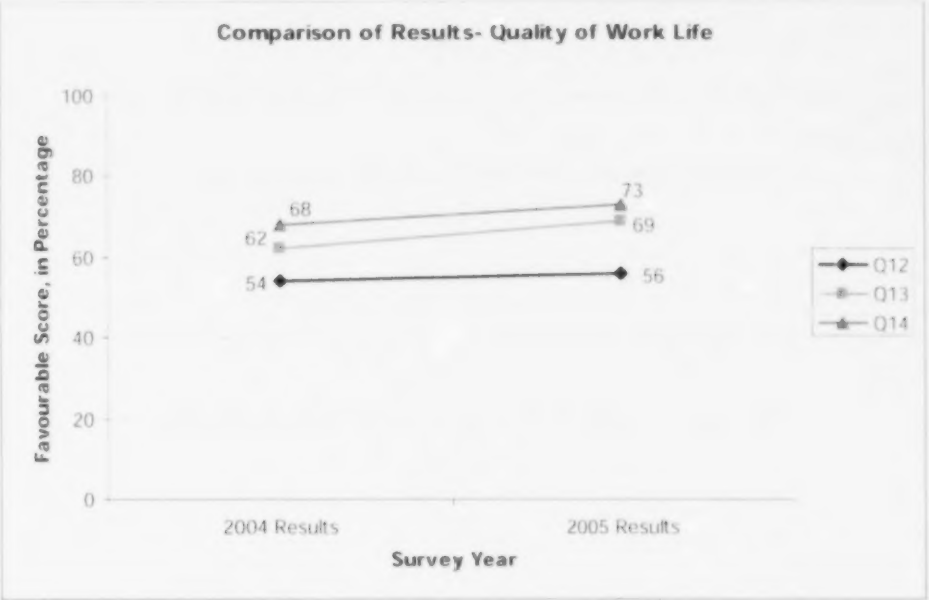
Quality of work life is an important topic for our employees.

- More than 90 per cent of respondents want to feel supported in balancing their work and personal/family life, want to feel they can achieve that balance, and want to have the resources they need in order to do their jobs.

- Approximately 70 per cent of respondents felt it was important to feel supported in their involvement with community and volunteer work.

- When asked about the importance of EAP services, approximately 70 per cent of respondents felt that it was important to be familiar with the EAP, to know how to contact EAP, and to feel comfortable using the services.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




Comparisons for the core quality-of-life questions (excludes EAP questions) demonstrate that employees felt more positively in this survey than they had in the last survey. There was a five percentage point increase in the number of employees who felt they could balance their work and personal/family life, and a seven percentage point increase in the number of respondents who report having the resources they need in order to do their jobs. Finally, there was a two percentage point increase in the number of respondents who report receiving the support they need to balance the demands of their work and family/personal life.

# Workplace Ethics

Question 20: I know where I can go for help (the process) to resolve workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts

Question 21: I can report concerns related to workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts without fear of reprisal

**Favourable Scores**

Workplace ethics questions generated somewhat favourable responses. When asked if they knew the process for reporting workplace ethical concerns, almost two-thirds of respondents agreed. However, when asked if they could report those concerns without fearing reprisal, fewer than half of respondents agreed.

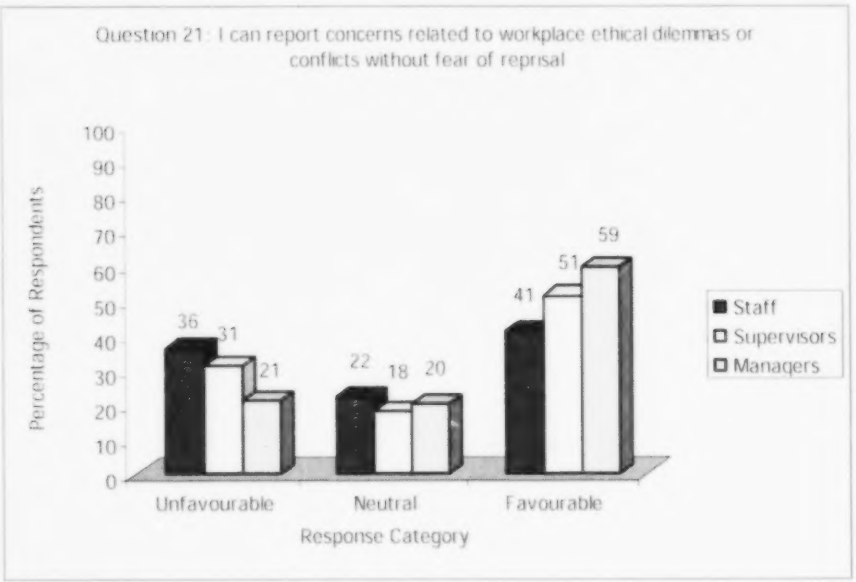
In further detail:

- Compared to managers, staff and supervisors were less likely to know the process for reporting workplace ethical concerns

or dilemmas, and were less likely to feel that they could report such concerns without fear of reprisal.

- As a respondent's age range increases, the more likely they are to be familiar with the process for reporting workplace ethical concerns or dilemmas.

- Compared to other pay plans, MCP, AS, and CUPE employees were more likely to feel that they could report workplace ethical concerns without fear of reprisal.



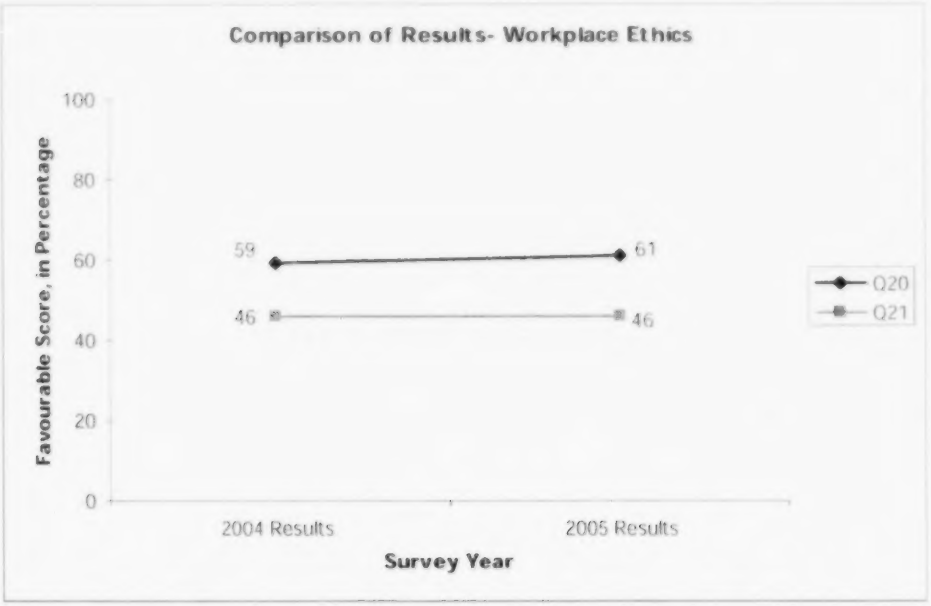

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

Workplace ethics is an important component of the work environment for employee.

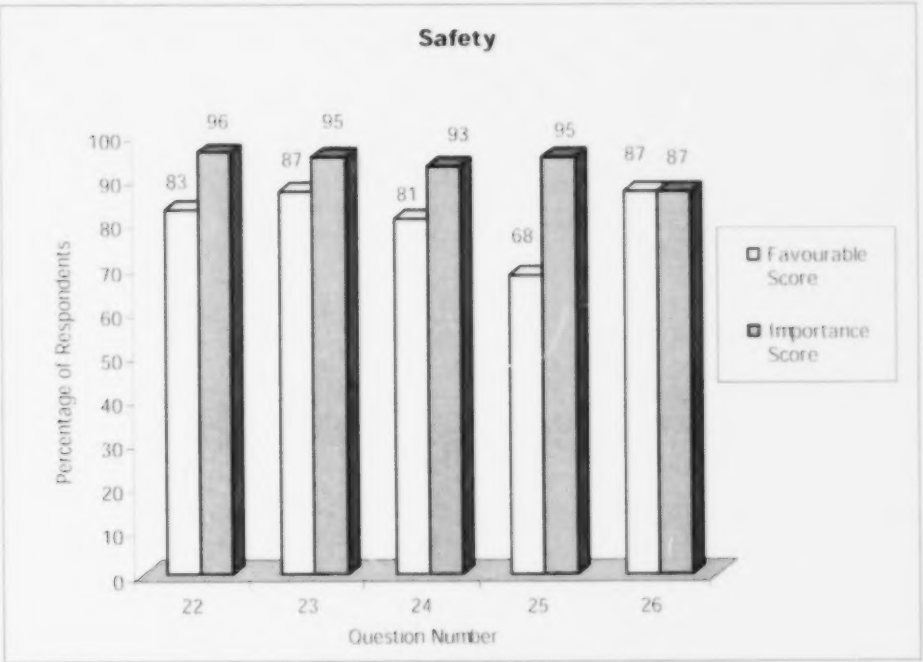
- More than 90 per cent of respondents felt that knowing the process for reporting workplace ethical concerns was important and that they should be able to report those concerns without fearing reprisal. This is a gap area for government.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




When comparing results from the 2004 survey to the 2005 mini-survey, we note that there was a slight increase in employees' level of agreement with knowing the process to report workplace ethical concerns. There was no change in the level of favourable scores from employees when asked if they could report workplace ethical concerns without fear of reprisal.

# Safety




Question 22: My department creates a safe work environment for its employees.
Question 23: I feel safe working in my job.
Question 24: I have not experienced harassment (sexual, racial) behavior in my workplace.
Question 25: I have not experienced bullying behavior in my workplace.
Question 26: I know who the Occupational Health and Safety representatives are for my work area.

**Favourable Scores**

Safety is an area of strength for the Government of Nova Scotia.

- Almost 90 per cent of respondents feel safe working in their jobs and know who their OHS representatives are.

- Slightly more than 80 per cent of respondents feel their department creates a safe work environment and feel they have not experienced harassment in their workplace. Of concern is the drop from 80 per cent for previous safety questions to 68 per cent for the question about bullying

behavior in the workplace.

In further detail:

- Compared to staff, managers and supervisors were more likely to report that they have not experienced bullying behavior in the workplace.

- MCP, AS, and PR employees were more likely to report that they have not experienced bullying behavior in the workplace, compared to employees in other pay plans.

- MCP, AS, PR, and employees in the other pay plan group were more likely to report feeling safe in their jobs, compared to employees in other pay plans.

- Employees aged 40-54 were more likely to have experienced harassment and bullying behavior in the workplace, compared to other age groups.

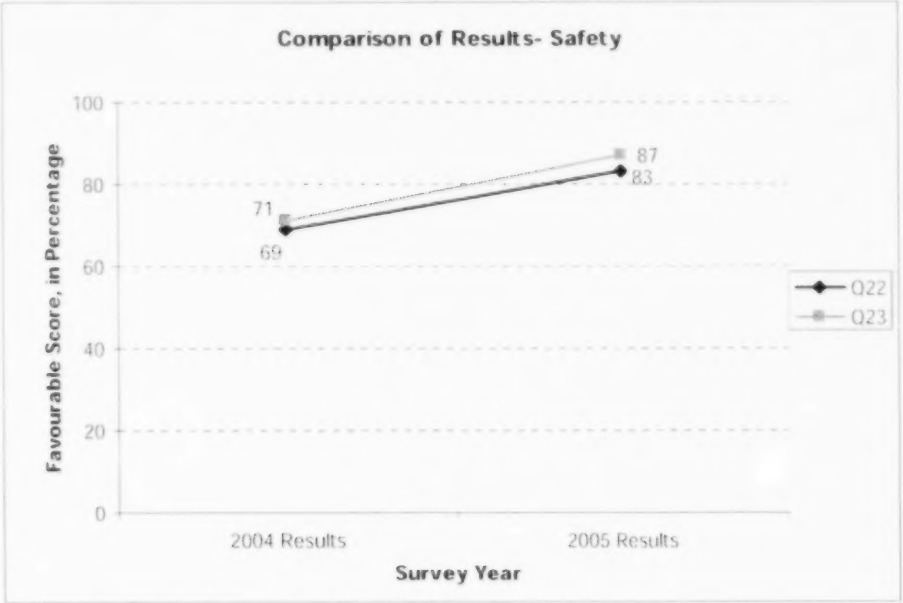
- Employees with less than grade 12 education were more likely to have experienced harassment in the workplace, compared to employees with other education levels.

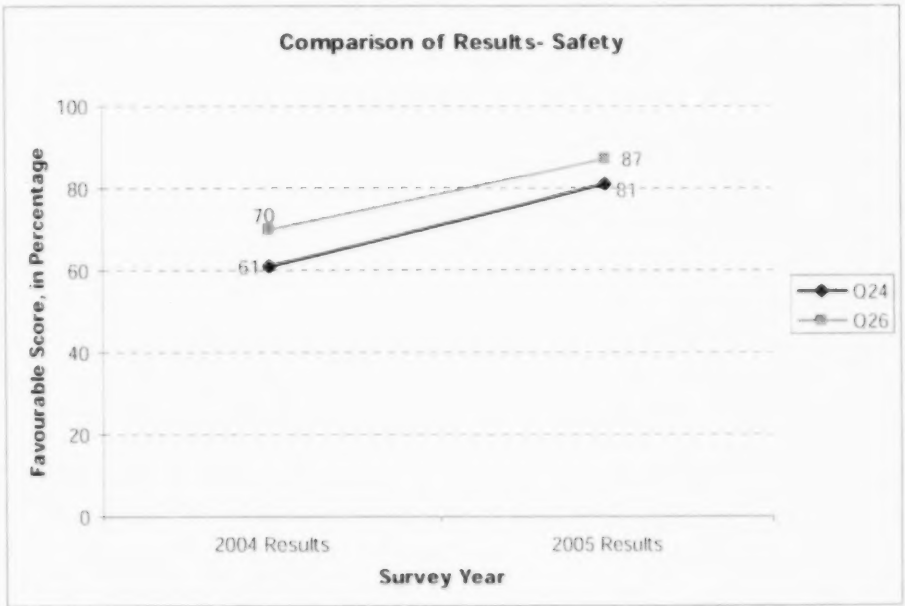
Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

More than 90 ninety per cent of respondents agree that it is important to feel safe working in their jobs, for the department to create a safe work environment and to not experience harassment or bullying in their jobs.

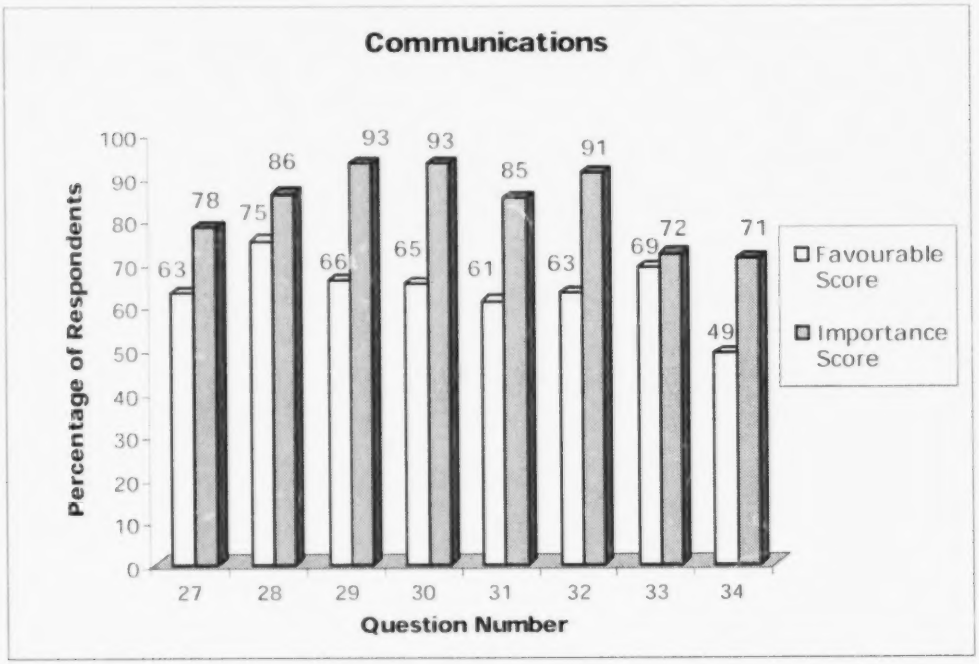
## How do the results compare to last year's survey results?



Safety was identified as an area of strength in the 2004 survey and this trend continues into 2005 with the results of our mini-survey. There were increases in the number of favourable responses across all safety questions, as demonstrated in the preceding graph.

# Communications




Question 27: I received communications about our department's business plan in the past 12 months
Question 28: I know how my work contributes to our department's priorities/purpose
Question 29: I receive the communications that I need to do my job well
Question 30: My supervisor gives me feedback about my work performance
Question 31: I participate in an annual performance appraisal/review with my supervisor
Question 32: Work-related information is shared within my department
Question 33: I received communications regarding the results of last year's government-wide employee survey
Question 34: I am aware of government's corporate values

**Favourable Scores**

Communications is an area of strength for the Government of Nova Scotia, with one exception.

- More than two-thirds of respondents report favourable scores regarding receiving business plan communications, understanding how their work contributes to the priorities and

purpose of their departments, feeling they receive the communications they need to do their jobs, and receiving feedback from their supervisors.

- More than two-thirds of respondents feel that work-related information is shared within their department.

- Fewer than half of respondents report being aware of government's corporate values.

In further detail:

- Older respondents were less likely to report that they participate in an annual performance appraisal/review and were less likely to report receiving communications about the results of last year's government-wide employee survey than younger respondents.

- Younger respondents were more likely to report receiving feedback from supervisors.

- As a person's level of education increases, so does the likelihood that they've received communications about the business plan, participated in a performance review with their supervisor, are aware of government's corporate values, and received communications about the results of last year's government-wide employee survey.

- Compared to other pay plan groups, employees in the MCP, PR, and AS pay plans were more likely to report that they had received communications about their department's business plan in the past twelve months.

- Employees in Corrections, CUPE, and TE pay plans were less likely to respond favourably to questions regarding communications compared to employees in Other pay plan

groups.

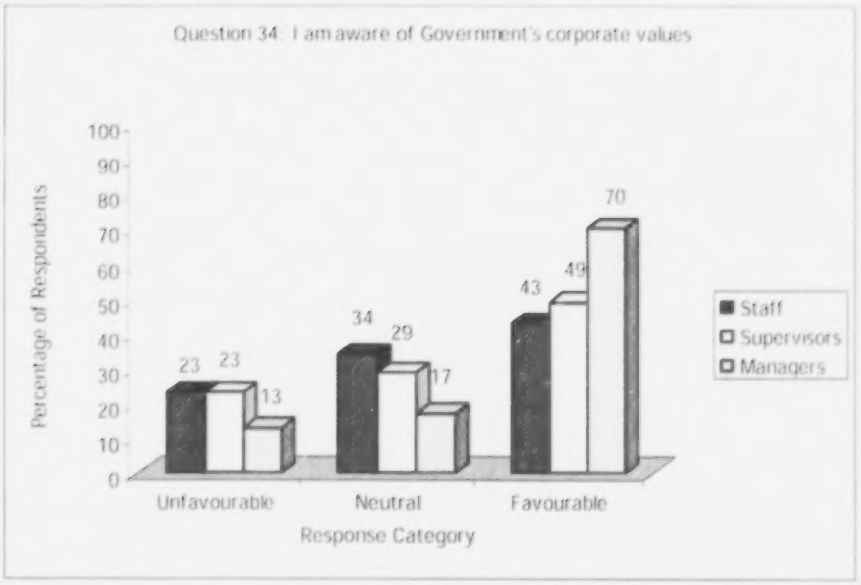
- Managers reported higher levels of favourable scores to all communication questions compared to staff and supervisors.

- Females were more likely to respond favourably when asked if they had received communications about the results of last year's government-wide survey compared to male employees.

- Respondents with less than five years of experience working for the government responded more favourably to questions regarding receiving communications about their department's business plan and receiving feedback from their supervisors.

- In addition, employees with less than two years of experience reported higher favourable scores regarding feeling work-related information is shared within the department, receiving communications about last year's employee survey, and being aware of government's corporate values.

- Employees who work in regional offices responded with less favourable responses than those who work in the Halifax Regional Municipality regarding receiving communications about the department's business plan and about knowing how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purpose.

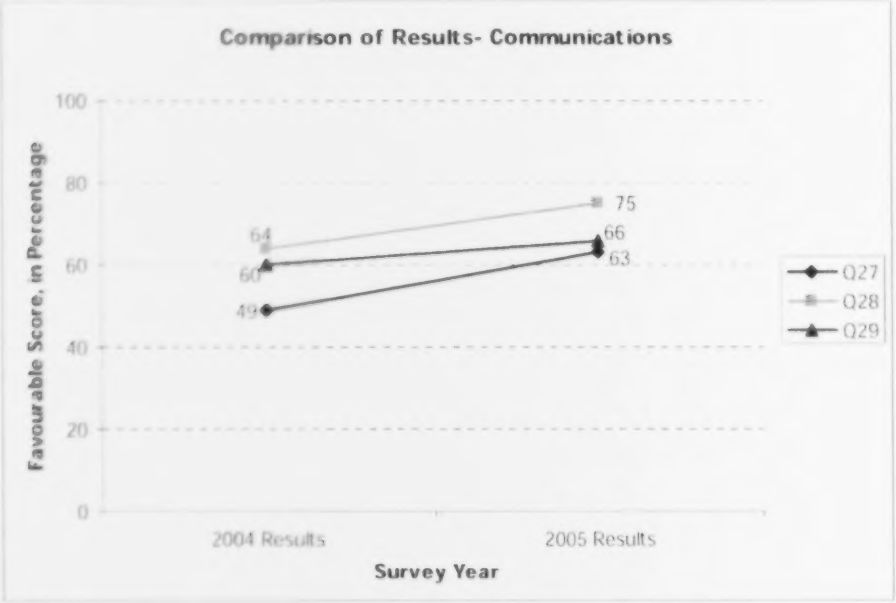


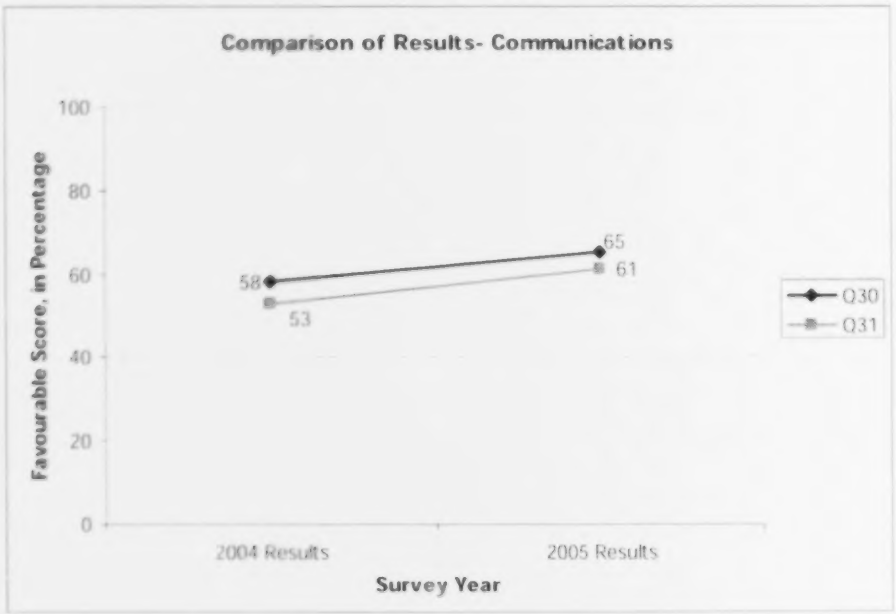

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

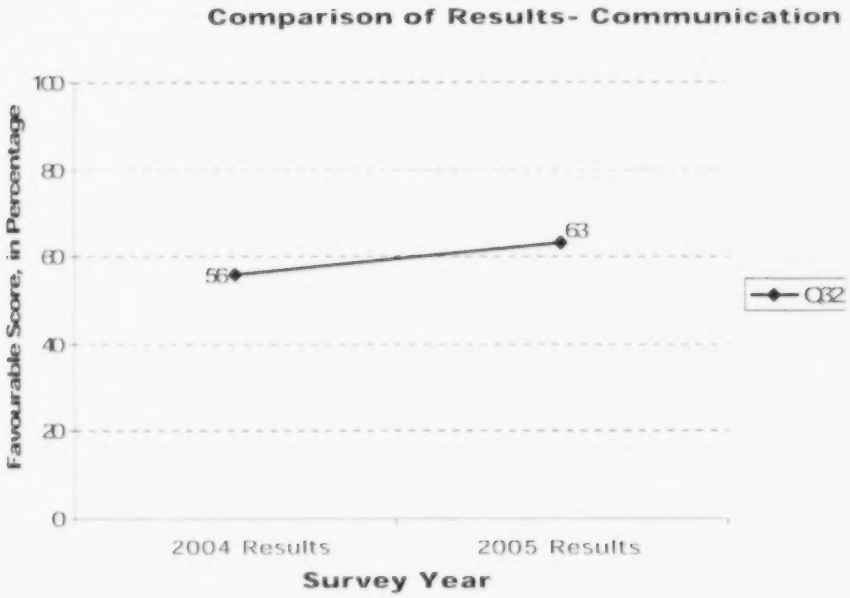
**Importance Scores**

Communications was identified as very important by employees, particularly receiving the communications they need to do their jobs well and receiving feedback from their supervisors. In addition, the sharing of work-related information and knowing how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purpose was deemed important. It is interesting to note that 70 per cent of respondents feel that being aware of government's corporate values is important. When looking at the detail breakdown of responses (refer to *The Supplement*), we can see that eight per cent of respondents feel it is not important, and another 20 per cent feel it is only somewhat important.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**

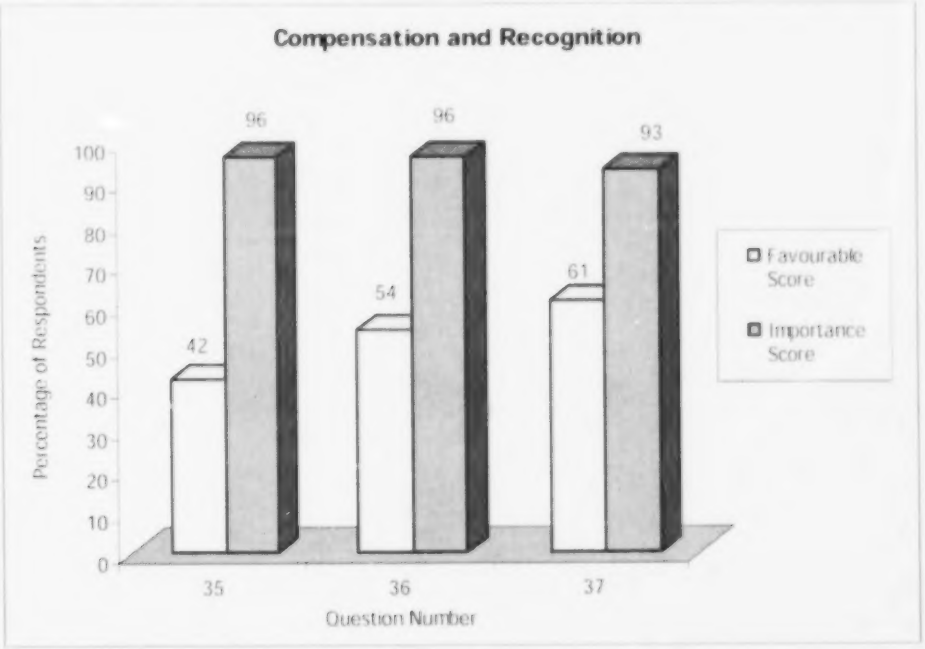





When comparing the results from the baseline 2004 survey to the results of this mini-survey, we can see that there have been increases in the number of favourable responses from employees. There are increases across all comparison questions, some as high as a 14 per cent increase (Q27: I received communications about our Department's business plan in the past 12 months.)

# Compensation and Recognition




Question 35: I am compensated fairly for my job

Question 36: I feel valued for my contributions at work

Question 37: I receive recognition from my supervisor for a job well done

**Favourable Scores**

Compensation and recognition questions generated mixed responses.

- Two-thirds of respondents feel they receive recognition from their supervisor for a job well done.
- 42 per cent agree that they are compensated fairly for their job.
- 54 per cent of respondents feel valued for their contributions at work.

In further detail:

- Managers reported a higher level of favourable scores for questions related to compensation and recognition, compared to staff and supervisors.

- MCP, CUPE, AS, and employees in the Other pay plan category were more likely to feel they were compensated fairly for their jobs, compared to employees in other pay plans.

- Employees in PR, CL, MCP, and AS pay plans were more likely to report feeling valued for their contributions and receiving recognition from their supervisors, compared to employees in the Other pay plan groups.

- Employees with six to ten years of experience were less likely to feel that they were compensated fairly for their jobs, compared to employees in other years of experience ranges.

- Employees with less than five years of experience were more likely to report that they received recognition from their supervisors and that they feel valued for their contributions.

- Employees who work in the Halifax Regional Municipality were more likely to report that they feel valued for their contributions than do employees who work in other regions.

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

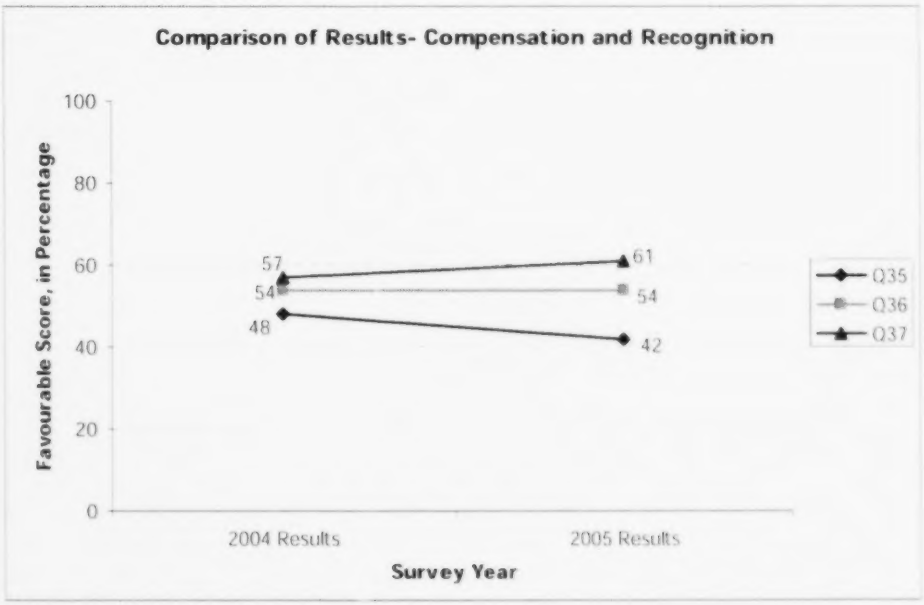
**Importance Scores**

Compensation and recognition is very important to employees.

- 96 per cent of respondents feel that being compensated fairly for their jobs is important and that they should feel valued for their contributions at work.
- 93 per cent of employees feel that receiving recognition from their supervisor for a job well done is important.

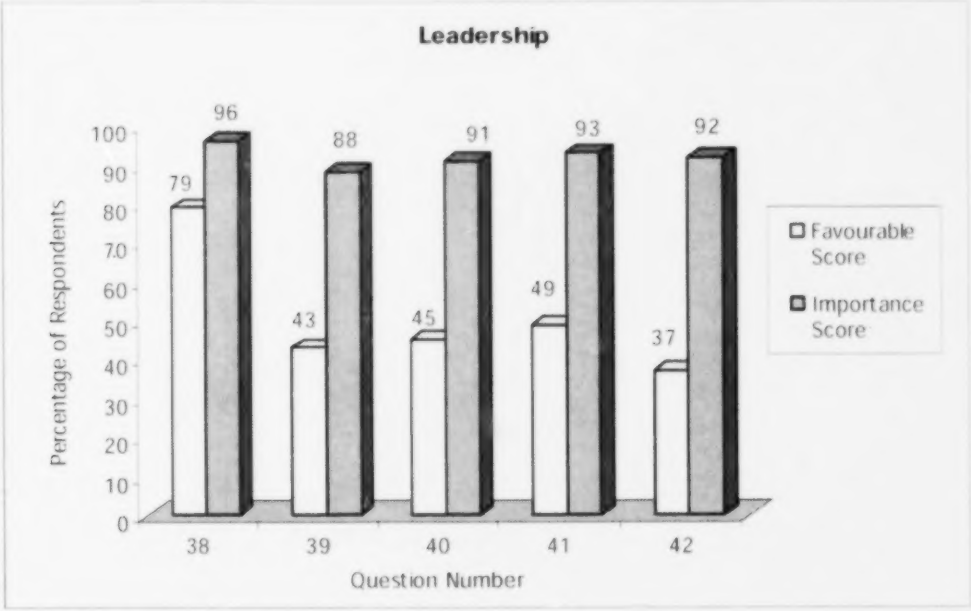
Compensation and feeling valued are two gap areas requiring further exploration, analysis and appropriate action.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**



When comparing results from the baseline 2004 survey to the 2005 mini-survey, we see that there has been some progress made with employees feeling they receive recognition from their supervisor for a job well done. Results for the compensation question declined, with a six per cent drop in the number of respondents who felt they were compensated fairly for their jobs. Furthermore, results for employees who feel valued remained constant, with a 54 per cent favourable score.

# Leadership




Question 38: I can talk openly with my supervisor about my work

Question 39: The senior leaders (comprised of: Deputy Ministers, Assistant/Associate Deputy Ministers, CEOs, Directors and Executive Directors) in my department set a good example for employees

Question 40: I have confidence in my department's senior leaders

Question 41: My supervisor manages conflict in my workgroup

Question 42: Senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey

**Favourable Scores**

Leadership is an area that requires improvement; however, questions regarding supervisors continue to generate positive results.

- 79 per cent of respondents feeling they can talk openly with their supervisor about their work.
- Less than half of respondents feel that their senior leaders set an example for employees, have confidence in their

department's senior leaders, and feel that their supervisor manages conflict in their workgroup.

- 37 per cent of respondents feel that senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey.

In further detail:

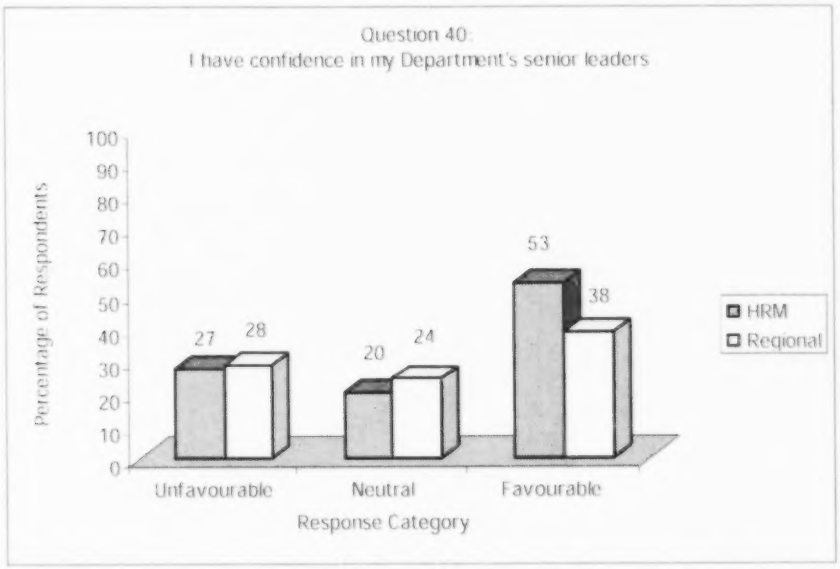
- Employees under the age of 29 report higher levels of favourable scores for leadership questions, compared to employees 40 years of age and older.

- Employees report lower levels of favourable scores regarding leadership questions, compared to supervisors and managers.

- MCP and AS employees reported higher levels of favourable scores for leadership questions. Corrections, employees in the Other pay plan category, and CUPE employees reported the lowest levels of favourable scores in the area of leadership.

- Regional employees were less likely to report favourable scores regarding leadership questions than staff in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

- Employees with less than five years of experience working for the Government of Nova Scotia reported higher levels of favourable scores for feeling that senior leaders set an example for staff and having confidence in the senior leadership within their department, compared to employees with more than five years of experience.




Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

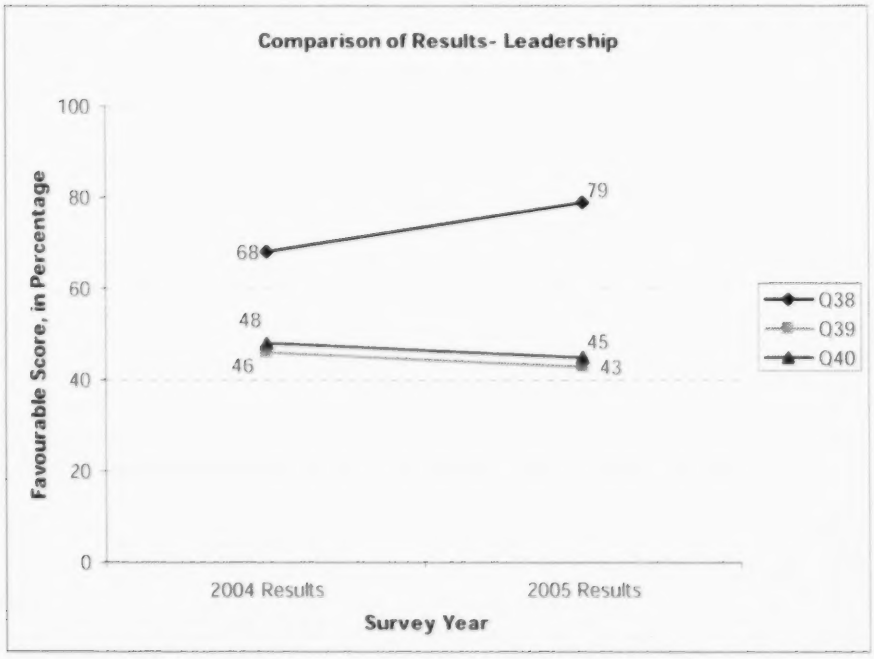
Leadership is another very important component to the government work environment.

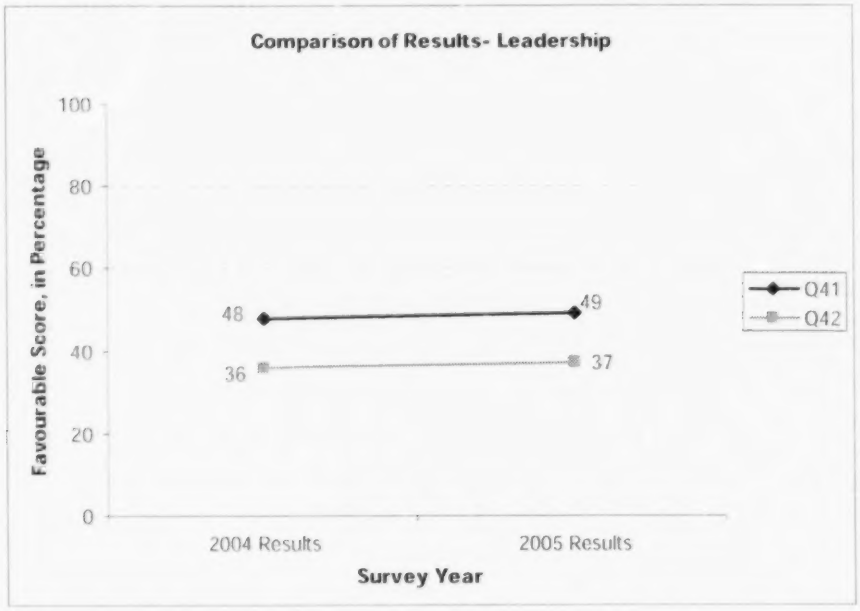
- 96 per cent of respondents feel that they should be able to talk openly with their supervisors.
- 90 per cent feel they should have confidence in their senior leaders, their supervisor should manage conflict in their workgroups, and senior management should try to resolve issues raised by employees in the survey.
- 88 per cent of respondents feel that senior leaders should set an example for staff.

There were several gap areas identified in the area of leadership, where there is a gap that exceeds 40 per cent between level of importance and level of agreement scores:

- The senior leaders in my department set a good example for employees.
- I have confidence in my department's senior leaders.
- My supervisor manages conflict in my workgroup.
- Senior management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey.

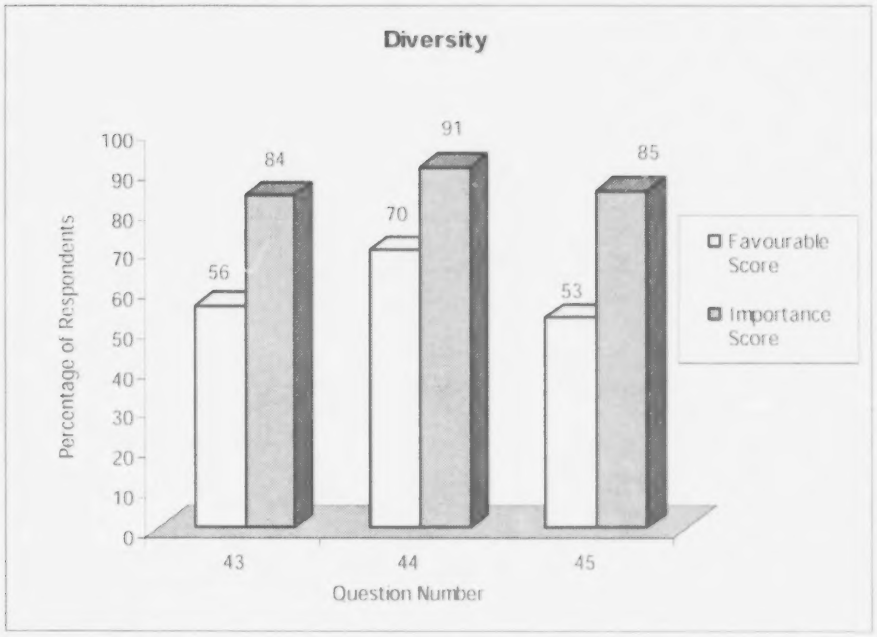
**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**






There are consistencies in the results between the 2004 employee survey and the 2005 mini-survey. There was an improvement in the percentage of respondents who felt they could talk openly with their supervisors about their work, an increase of 11 per cent. There was a slight decline in favourable responses when asked if senior leaders set an example for staff and if respondents had confidence in their senior leaders.

# Diversity




Question 43: The Government of Nova Scotia demonstrates its commitment to diversity in the workplace

Question 44: Employees in my Department are respectful of employee differences

Question 45: My Department values diversity

**Favourable Scores**

Questions regarding diversity generated mixed results from employees.

- More than half of the respondents agreed that the Government of Nova Scotia demonstrates its commitment to diversity in the workplace and that their department values diversity.

- 70 per cent of respondents felt that employees in their department were respectful of employee differences.

In further detail:

- Regional employees were less likely to feel that employees in their department were respectful of employee differences, compared to employees in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

- Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to feel that their department valued diversity and that employees were respectful of employee differences.

- Employees in the CL, MCP, and AS pay plans were more likely to feel that their departments value diversity; employees in CUPE and the Other pay plan category were less likely to agree.

- Employees in CUPE, TE and the Other pay plan category were less likely to report that they feel the Government of Nova Scotia demonstrates its commitment to diversity.

- Managers reported higher levels of favourable scores regarding diversity questions compared to responses from staff and supervisors.

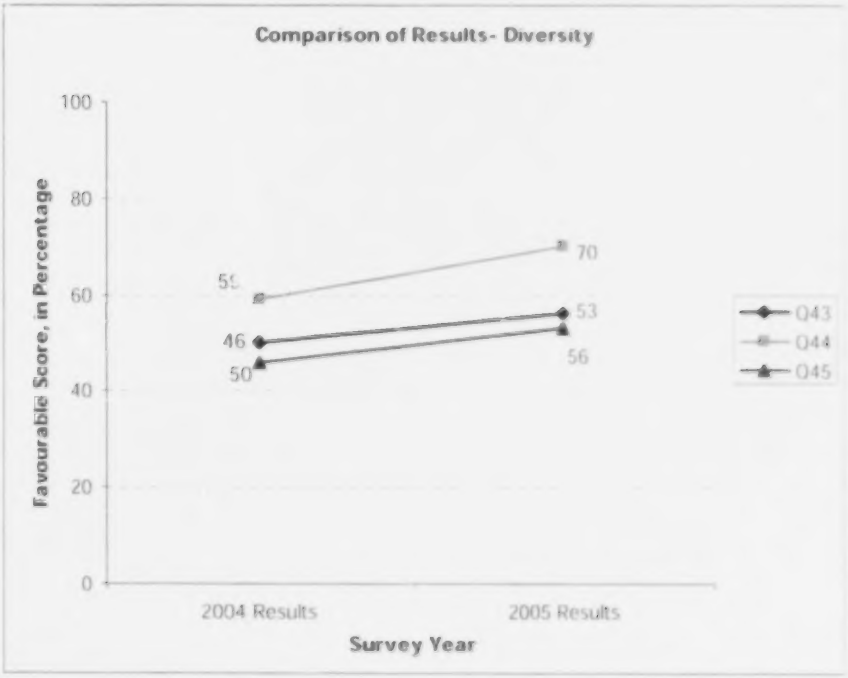
- Employees with less than grade 12 education were less likely to report favourably regarding diversity questions, compared to employees with other education levels.

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

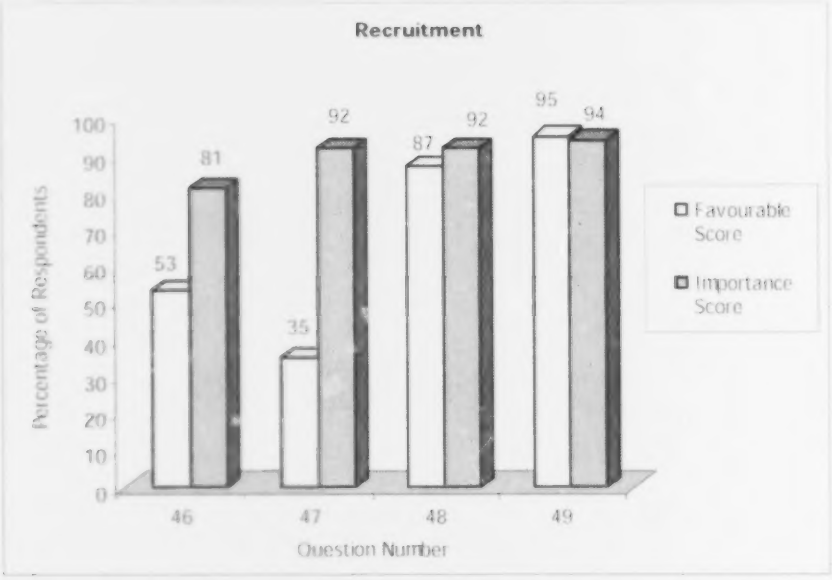
More than 90 per cent of respondents felt it was important for employees in their departments to respect employee differences and for their departments to value diversity. In addition, more than 80 per cent of respondents felt it was important for the Government of Nova Scotia to demonstrate its commitment to diversity in the workplace.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




When comparing the results from the 2004 employee survey and the results of the 2005 mini survey, we can see that there was an increase in the number of favourable scores for diversity questions, an increase of up to 11 per cent.

# Recruitment




Question 46: I would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as one of the best places to work in my community

Question 47: Hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia is based on merit

Question 48: Employees have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia

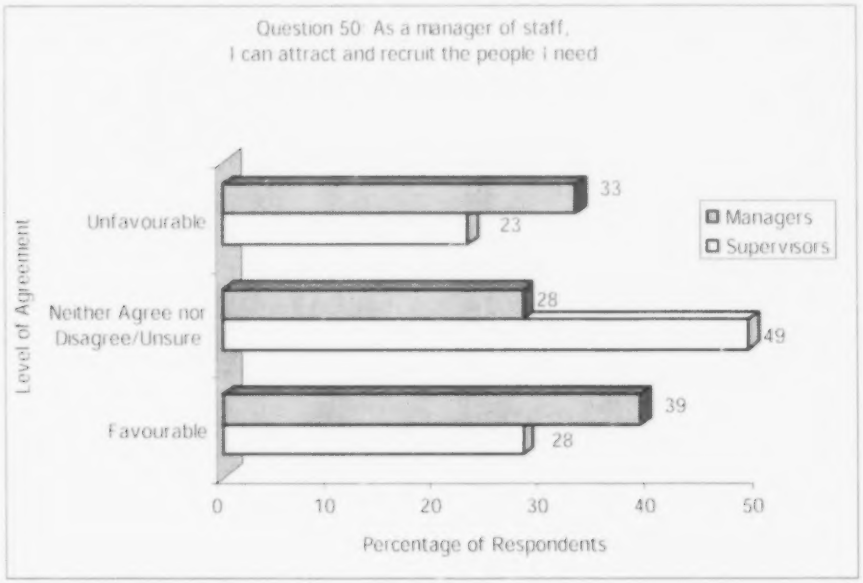
Question 49: I have the required qualifications to meet the demands of my job

**Favourable Scores**

Recruitment questions generated mixed responses from employees:

- 87 per cent of respondents felt that employees have access to job postings.
- 95 per cent feel they have the required qualifications to meet the needs of their job.
- 35 per cent of respondents agree that hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia is based on merit.

- Slightly more than half of respondents felt that they would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as one of the best places to work in their community.




In reporting results for question 50, only responses provided by managers and supervisors were reported; staff responses were not included as the question was directed to supervisors and managers.

When asking managers if they felt they could attract and retain the staff they needed:

- 39 per cent of managers agreed, and 28 per cent of supervisors agreed (the average of the two is 33 per cent).

- Almost half of supervisors were neutral, and a third of managers who responded disagreed with the statement.

In further detail:

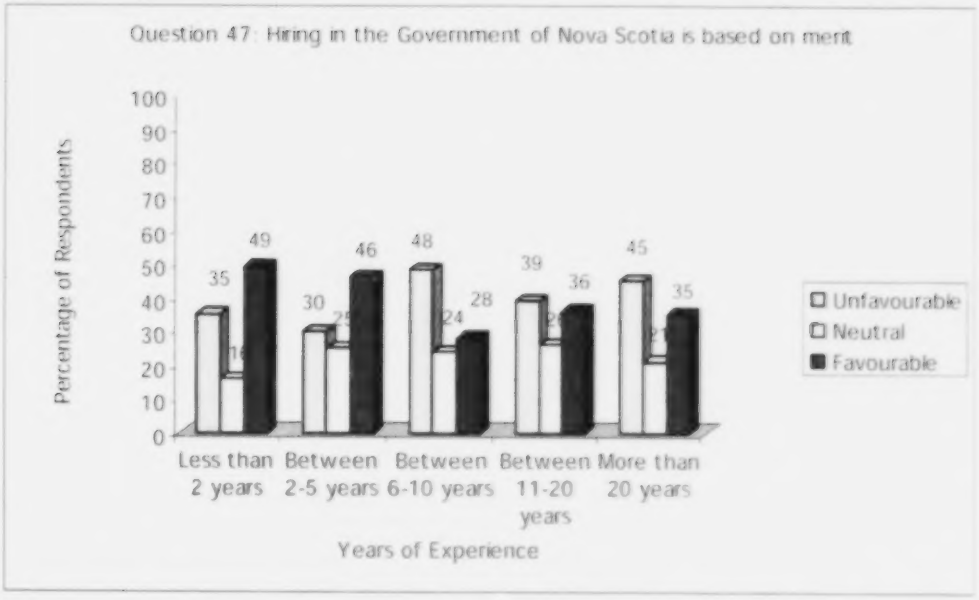
- Employees in the AS, CL, and Other pay plan categories were more likely to feel that hiring was based on merit; employees in CUPE, TE, and Corrections pay plans were less likely to agree.

- Managers were more likely to feel that hiring was based on merit compared to employees and supervisors.

- Employees with less than five years of experience working for the Government of Nova Scotia were more likely to recommend government as one of the best places to work in their communities, compared to employees with more years of experience working for government.

- Employees with less than five years experience working for the Government of Nova Scotia were also more likely to feel that hiring was based on merit, compared to employees who have more years of experience working for government

- Employees between the ages of 30-39 were more likely to report they would recommend government as one of the best places to work in their community compared to other age groups.

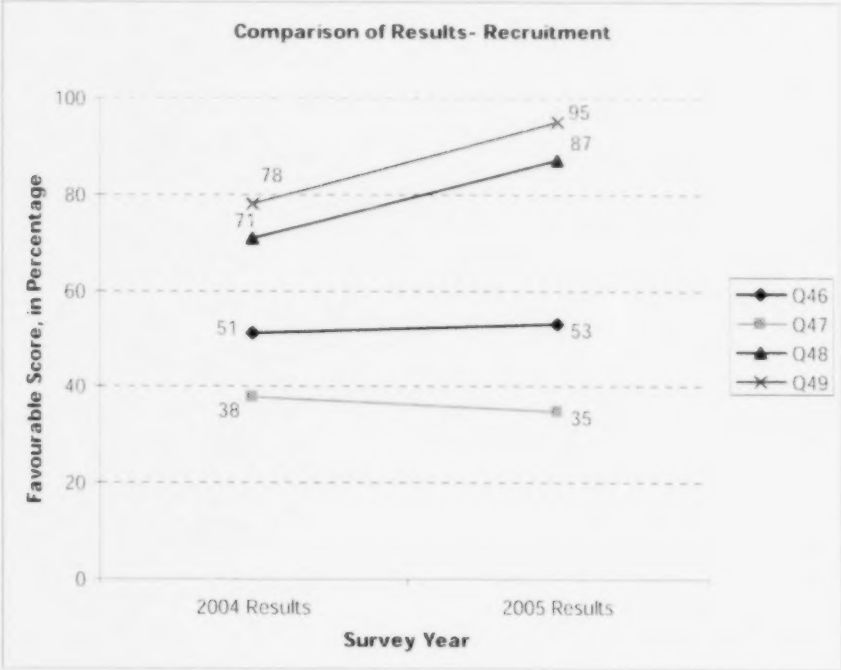



Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

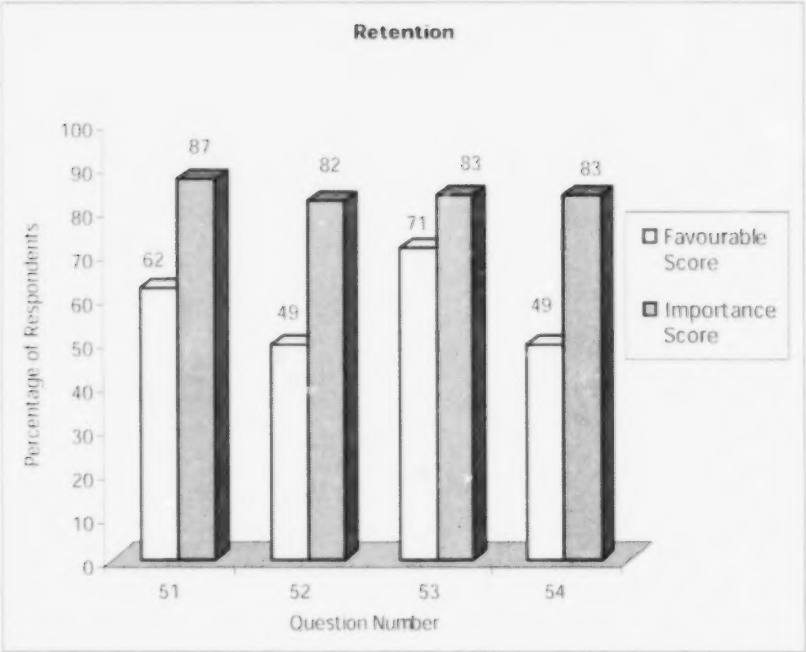
More than 90 per cent of respondents feel that hiring should be based on merit, that employees should have access to job postings, and that employees should have the required qualifications they need to meet the needs of their jobs. Furthermore, merit-based hiring concerns are a gap area with more than a 40 per cent difference between level of importance and level of agreement scores from staff.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**




A comparison of results from the 2004 employee survey and the 2005 mini-survey, shows increases in the number of favourable scores for questions pertaining to having access to job postings and feeling qualified for their jobs. There was a slight increase in favourable responses to the question regarding recommending government as one of the best places to work in their communities. There was a slight decline in favourable responses when asked about merit-based hiring practices in the Government of Nova Scotia.

# Retention




Question 51: I see a future for my career, working for the Government of Nova Scotia
Question 52: Even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in my community, I would stay with the Government of Nova Scotia
Question 53: I am proud to work as a public servant
Question 54: I work for an effective organization; in other words, my Department regularly achieves the goals set out in our business plan

**Favourable Scores**

More than two-thirds of respondents agreed that they saw a future for their careers, working for the Government of Nova Scotia. Slightly less than half of respondents agreed that even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in their community, they would stay with the Government of Nova Scotia. Slightly fewer than half of respondents felt that they worked for an effective organization, yet 71 per cent of those who responded felt proud to work as a public servant.

In further detail:

- Managers were more likely to feel that they saw a future for their careers working for the Government of Nova Scotia. Staff were less likely to feel that they saw a future for their careers.

- Managers reported the highest levels of feeling proud to work as a public servant and feeling they worked for an effective organization compared to staff and supervisors.

- Younger respondents were more likely to feel they saw a future for their careers with the Government of Nova Scotia, yet they were also more likely to state that they would leave if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in their community.

- Employees age 30-39 reported the highest levels of pride to work as a public servant compared to employees in other age groups.

- MCP, CL, and AS employees were more likely to feel that they worked for an effective organization, compared to employees in other pay plans.

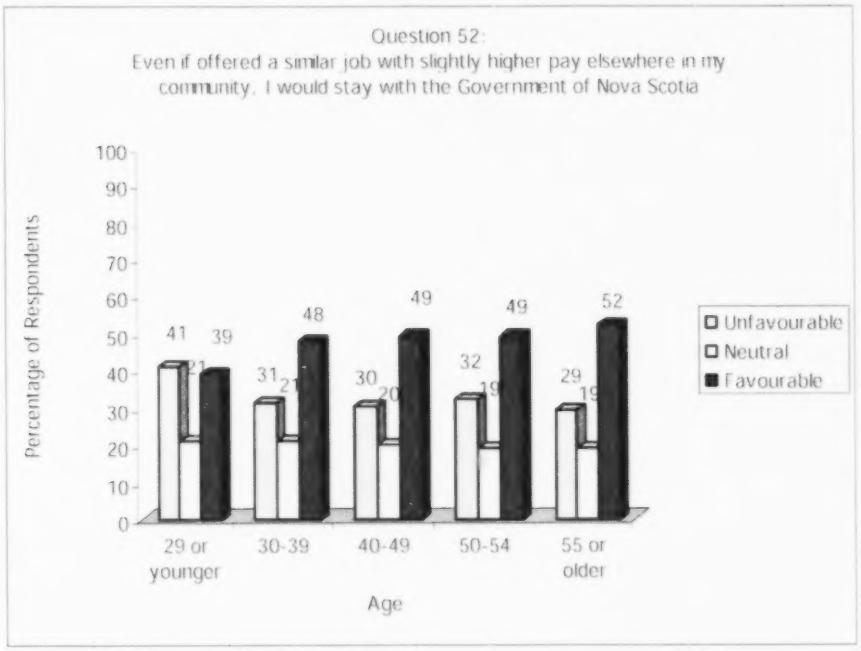
- CUPE pay plan employees reported lower levels of favourable scores regarding seeing a future for their career, working for the Government of Nova Scotia compared to other pay plans.

- Respondents from regional offices reported lower levels of favourable scores when asked if they worked for an effective organization, compared to employees in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

- As a person's education level increases, the more likely they are to report they'd leave government if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in their community.

In reporting results for question 55, only responses provided by managers and supervisors were reported; staff responses were not included as the question was directed to supervisors and managers.

Half of managers, and one-third of supervisors, who responded felt that they can retain the people they need in order to achieve their division/department goals. Almost one-third of managers disagreed, and said they couldn't retain the people they needed, and half of supervisors who responded said that they were unsure/neutral (The average of the two is 36 per cent).

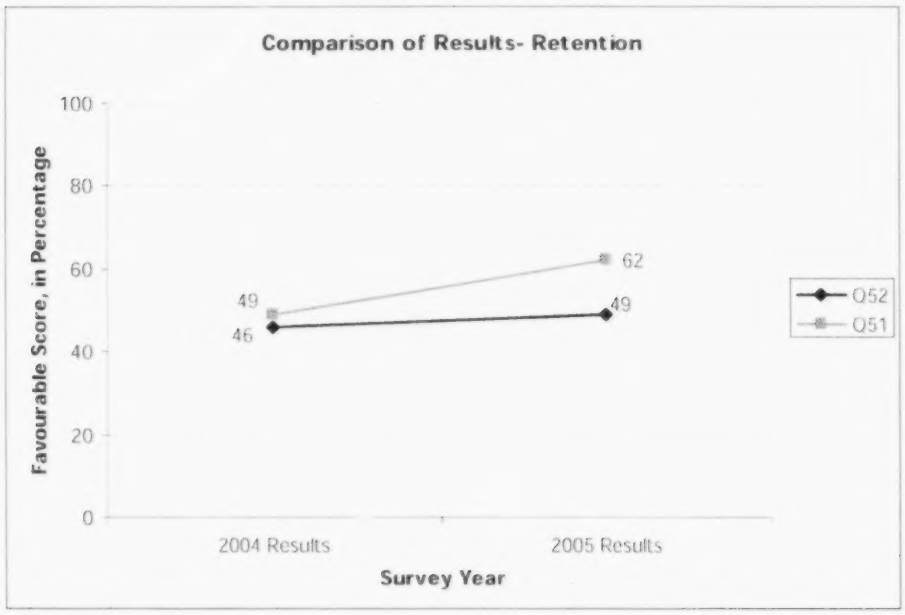


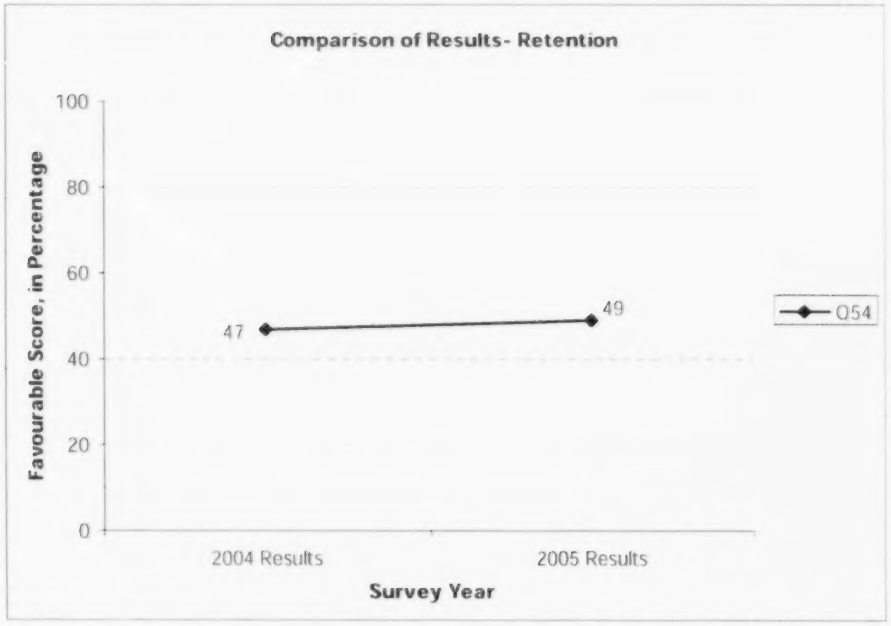

Please refer to *Appendix I* for detailed breakdown of responses by question, and *The Supplement* for a summary of responses sorted by demographics.

**Importance Scores**

Retention was an important factor for employees in their work environments. In particular, more than 90 per cent of respondents want to see a future for their careers with the Government of Nova Scotia. Furthermore, more than 80 per cent want to feel proud to work as a public servant, think it's important to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, and want to work for an effective organization.

**How do the results compare to last year's survey results?**



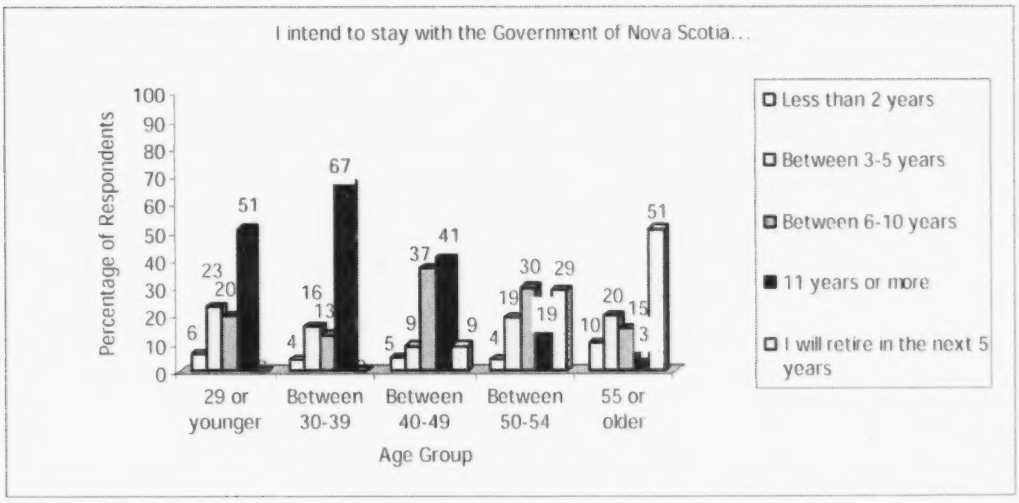



A comparison of results between the 2004 survey to the results of the 2005 mini-survey shows that there was an increase of approximately 13 per cent in the number of respondents who see a future for their careers in government. There was also a slight increase, of approximately three per cent, in the number of respondents who responded favourably to questions about staying with the Government of Nova Scotia and working for an effective organization.

## How long do employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia?

When examining employee's intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, we can see that more than half of respondents under the age of 29 plan to stay with government for 11 years or more. That number climbs to 67 per cent for respondents between the ages of 30-39. Forty one per cent of employees aged 40-49 plan to stay for 11 years or more; that number drops to 19 per cent for employees aged 50-54.

More than half of respondents aged 55 or older plan to retire within the next five years, and another 29 per cent between the ages of 50-54 plan to retire within the next five years.



# CHAPTER FIVE

## Conclusions

This latest employee survey shows that government is making progress, and that there are areas that continue to require improvement.

- The survey shows that employees feel safe, believe they have the qualifications to meet the needs of their job and feel that the people they work with help each other out.

- In addition, employees feel that they can provide input into decisions that affect their job, talk openly with their supervisor, share work-related information within their department (including business plans) and know how their work contributes to the department's priorities/purposes. They receive recognition and feedback from their supervisor and believe their department is respectful of employees' differences.

- Areas of concern that arose in the 2004 baseline survey are reinforced this year. These include perceptions of merit-based hiring, opportunities for career advancement, and government's commitment to respond to survey concerns. In addition, managers expressed concerns regarding their ability to attract, recruit and retain qualified employees. Managers had not been previously asked this question.

As discussed at the beginning of the report, employers can gain insight into employee perceptions of their work environment

through the use of an employee survey. Information gathered through an employee survey provides government with a better understanding of the following.

- Areas of strength in the government work environment;
- Areas to focus on in order to make improvements;
- Changes in employee perceptions over time; and,
- Employee engagement in the government work environment.

## Overall, what are the areas of strength in the Government work environment?

Results indicated several areas of strength that government should continue to build upon and celebrate. Specifically, employees responded favourably to questions regarding teamwork, employee involvement in work-related decisions, training, safety, and communications. In addition, most respondents felt proud to work as public servants, and almost two-thirds felt they saw a future for their careers, with the Government of Nova Scotia.

***Clear strengths to celebrate and build upon***

*At least 80 per cent of respondents believe:*

- *The people they work with make an effort to help each other.*
- *They can apply what they have learned in training to their job.*
- *Their department creates a safe work environment for its employees.*
- *They feel safe working in their job.*
- *They have not experienced harassment behaviour in their workplace.*
- *They know who the OHS representatives are in their work area.*
- *They have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia.*
- *They have the required qualifications to meet the needs of their job.*

# Where should government focus in order to make improvements to the work environment?

Consistent with results collected in the 2004 baseline employee survey, government needs to address results related to perceptions of:

- Opportunities for career-advancement;
- Merit-based hiring practices; and,
- Informing employees about action on the survey results.

In the 2004 employee survey, the three areas listed above had favourable scores of less than 40 per cent. Results in these areas have not changed and they require immediate attention and related action. These areas have also been identified as gap areas, again indicating that government is not meeting employee expectations in these areas.

In addition, this mini-survey asked managers and supervisors two new questions which resulted in a combined favourable score of less than 40 per cent. Managers and supervisors do not feel they can attract, recruit and retain the people they need to meet their business requirements. With future surveys, government can explore perceptions of managers and supervisors in this area further to understand their concerns and priorities.

# Have the results changed over time?

As with any change, progress cannot happen overnight, but progress towards an improved work environment should become apparent over time. The 2004 employee survey provided a baseline to be used to measure long-term progress. The 2005 mini-survey allows government to gauge the extent of progress to date. This continued assessment permits government to identify and substantiate areas of concern, to note whether corrective measures have had an impact, and to detect the extent to which improvements have occurred. It is important to note that a long-term perceptive should be taken when looking for trends in the data.

The following table outlines differences in findings between the 2004 and 2005 surveys:

| ***How many survey questions had changes in favourable responses from 2004 to 2005?*** |
|---|
| **34** questions had increases in the number of favourable responses.<br>**6** questions had decreases in the number of favourable responses.<br>**3** questions had no change in the number of favourable responses.<br>**13** question areas were not eligible for comparisons, as 11 questions were new and two did not use the answer scale used to calculate favourable responses. |

For further details about the changes and comparisons, please refer to Chapter Three of this report.

# Are employees in the Government of Nova Scotia engaged?

As discussed in Chapter Three, employee engagement looks at three overall areas: do employees understand how their work relates to government's goals and objectives, are employees motivated in their jobs, and whether employees intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia. Results of this survey confirm the 2004 employee survey results that indicate that most government employees are neither actively engaged nor actively disengaged in the work environment. The concern for government is that employees who are not completely engaged could easily become disengaged.

Since, an employee's engagement level is associated with work attendance and performance, a disengaged workforce could result in "...a revolving door of employees, or worse, an organization in which unmotivated employees deliver minimally acceptable performance."[1] It is the "employees who are engaged that intend to stay with an organization, feel connected to the organization's goals and objectives, and are motivated in their jobs."[2]

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[1] Monica Belcourt and Simon Taggar, "Making government The Best Place to Work", IPAC Report on Research and Roundtable discussions No. 8, 2002

[2] Parker and Wright (2001)

Government needs to improve in two areas to influence employee engagement.

- Employee's understanding of how their work relates to government's goals and objectives; and,
- Employee's intentions to stay with the government and, specifically, their concerns related to merit-based hiring practices and perceptions of career-advancement opportunities.

## What can Government learn from the survey to help attract, recruit, motivate and retain employees?

The Government of Nova Scotia like other employers in both the public and private sectors, is trying to determine how it can attract, motivate and retain employees. Leaders need to create a work environment that can positively influence employee engagement or run the risk of having an unmotivated workforce.

This survey – when linked to the 2004 employee survey – begins to enhance our understanding of the measures of engagement, the relationships between the measures, and how to best influence these areas to produce the most effective results.

As we continue to survey, we will have a better understanding of how to recruit, motivate and retain employees. The net effect of understanding and action will be a work environment that will attract, motivate and retain committed public servants who are proud to provide excellent service to Nova Scotians.

# How should the results of the employee mini-survey be used in government?

Results from surveys can help government make improvements in the work environment. The information obtained from employees should be used to help inform government about what is working, what needs adjustment and what is not working. It can provide information as to whether an issue is government-wide or is of particular concern for a demographic group (gender, age, department, etc.)

# Next Steps and Recommendations

**Commit**

Listening to employees and acting on what is heard is a significant first step toward continuous improvement in the workplace. Annual surveys also validate the results from the baseline employee survey, help identify new issues and reinforce the need for action in areas that were previously identified. In the survey, employee's repeatedly stated:

- "Thank you for asking."
- "Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback."
- "Appreciate the opportunity and look forward to the results."

Employees also expressed concerns, through their comments, that leaders will not try to address the issues raised in the survey. Action needs to be more clearly communicated and demonstrated.

Recommendations:

- Leaders should continue to demonstrate their commitment to listening to employees and to finding and implementing solutions.

**Assess**

The results should support an on-going internal assessment and provide government an opportunity to track its progress towards achieving goals. The results of this mini-survey can be compared to the baseline results collected in 2004, however, it should be

noted that a long-term perspective should be taken when looking for trends in the data. The results of all surveys will provide government with a longitudinal perspective that will sufficiently support trend analysis and performance tracking.

Recommendations:

- Annual performance tracking and assessments should continue to take place to enable the measurement of progress, and any other impacts.
- Performance targets should be incorporated in the 2007 employee survey.
- Survey results should support an on-going internal assessment and provide government with an opportunity to track its progress towards achieving goals.
- Government should continue to develop a model of employee engagement that identifies the critical engagement factors to be measured. This model should be incorporated into future surveys.

**Report**

Senior managers need to keep employees informed about what is happening, what they as leaders intend to accomplish, what they have achieved to date, and remind employees why their input is important. Communication should be open, honest and on-going.

Recommendations:

- The release of the results, and the response to the results should be done in a coordinated, timely, inclusive and transparent manner.
- Departments should provide regular reporting of progress to employees.
- Where appropriate, government should clearly connect actions/initiatives that address employee concerns raised through the survey back to the survey results, so employees can see the clear link between their feedback and actions taken.
- Coordinated by a corporate advisory body, a summary progress report should be released to all employees on a semi-annual basis.

**Celebrate**

Strengths, best practices and success stories should be recognized, celebrated and shared across government.

Recommendations:

- Government should celebrate its strengths and continue to build on these areas.

**Learn**

Employee surveys draw attention to areas that employees feel are not being adequately addressed, and highlight what employees feel is important. There are times when a survey result only scratches at the surface of an issue and further exploration is required. What is the cause of this concern? Is this an awareness issue or a process issue? Is a solution starting to have an impact? Questions like these, and others, need to be addressed prior to any action planning so that there is a clear understanding of the underlying problem. Identifying root causes is critical to implementing any successful solution.

Recommendations:

- Where the issue/problem is not clear, further exploration should be conducted prior to any action planning, so that the underlying cause is understood and that the solutions will address the cause. This approach should be clearly conveyed to employees. Activities such as brainstorming sessions, focus groups, best-practice reviews, and/or additional supplementary research, as well as employees' written survey comments, can help highlight some of the root causes of identified issues.
- Departments should engage in additional discussions with employees to provide clarification and to highlight how government might act to address the concerns reported in the employee survey.

**Act**

This is the most critical step in responding to the survey results. Results from the survey reinforce the need for action in areas noted in the 2004 employee survey. By analyzing the survey responses and additional comments, it appears that employees

are not clear on what actions are taking place, if any, and who is responsible for action planning.

Recommendations:

- Identifying who is accountable for responding and acting upon the results, at both a corporate and department level, and how they are held accountable, should be clearly defined and communicated to employees.
- Employees and management should jointly focus on positive change and action, with employees engaged in developing solutions.
- Departments should be encouraged to act on concerns expressed in the survey and advise the Corporate Advisory Committee of key issues that require an organization-wide response or action.
- Corporately, the survey results should be integrated into the business and strategic planning process throughout government; into the *Corporate Human Resource Plan;* and into the design of new, or redesign of existing, human-resource strategies, policies, programs and services.
- Government should focus on developing solutions for the areas of concern identified in both the 2004 and 2005 surveys—employees' perceptions of:
  - Opportunities for career-advancement;
  - Merit-based hiring practices; and,
  - Survey response and action.

**Opportunities for Career-advancement/Merit-based Hiring Practices:**

When employees were asked if they saw a future for their careers with the Government of Nova Scotia, 61 per cent of respondents

provided favourable responses. When employees were asked if they had opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia, only 37 per cent responded favourably. From this, we can conclude that employees perceive barriers to their opportunities for career advancement. Based on the employees' written survey comments, some of the barriers they perceive include:

- How assignments, that lead to promotional/career advancement opportunities, are assigned;
- Access to career pathing and succession management tools;
- Access to unionized positions;
- The level of internal recognition (i.e. belief that candidates from outside of government are hired for senior positions); and,
- That promotion is based solely on the employee's performance during the job interview.

Recommendations:

- Policies/guidelines should be developed and communicated to ensure fair access to developmental assignments and projects.
- Managers and supervisors should be held accountable, through performance goals, to support career development and learning plans for their employees throughout the performance-management process.
- Departments should ensure that managers and supervisors are provided with the support needed to assist employees in developing learning and career - development plans.
- Employees should be informed of available supports regarding career advancement and growth, as well as the process for succession management.
- The Public Service Commission should continue to

monitor government's compliance to the fair hiring guidelines and policy. Review or audit recommendations should be reviewed and acted upon.

- Further exploration should be conducted to better understand the factors that are contributing to employees' negative perceptions of career-advancement opportunities. This survey question should be expanded to ask employees what they perceive as barriers to career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.

**Acting on the results of the survey**

Employees' candid opinions provide valuable insight. Surveying is a significant commitment to improve the work environment. It is equally important for employees to see that their concerns are addressed by action plans that provide relevant solutions. Making improvements to the work environment will enhance employees' satisfaction with and commitment to government's effectiveness, and service delivery to the public.

Implementing the recommendations made in this report will help address employees' concerns.

# What are Evaluation and Audit's next steps?

1. As previously noted, Evaluation and Audit will produce a guide to provide tips and examples of how the results and data obtained through employee surveys can be analyzed and used.

2. Evaluation and Audit will continue to enhance the survey tool and processes. One way of achieving this goal is by participating in joint provincial and federal government employee survey initiative. The objective of our participation in this initiative is to:

- Enhance government's ability to make cross-jurisdictional comparisons; and,
- Refine our employee engagement model.

This survey project supports Evaluation and Audit's overall objective to provide government with the best possible information for assessing their human resource management performance.

**Inter-jurisdictional employee survey project**

In recent years, there has been growth in the number of public sector jurisdictions across Canada that are involved in employee surveying. When looking at survey results, a key question that emerges is "How do our results compare to other similar organizations?"

This challenge for public sector organizations was discussed at the September 2004 Annual Public Service Commissioner's Conference. In order to address this concern, an inter-jurisdictional project team was appointed to develop a common engagement model as well as a common set of survey questions to measure engagement factors.

The team is led by Alberta and has representatives from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Nova Scotia and the Federal Government. The project team reviewed existing definitions, models, and drivers of employee engagement, in order to develop a model of employee engagement that will guide the development of a common set of questions for use in our employee surveys. The model was endorsed by Commissioners at their 2005 Annual Public Service Commissioner's Conference. The model of employee engagement will be incorporated into future surveys, starting in the winter of 2006.

# Appendices

Appendix I – **Summary of Responses by Question**

Appendix II – **Recommendations Table**

Appendix III – **Instructions and Survey Instrument**

## Appendix I: Summary of Results by Question

| Category | Question | % Favourable | % Neutral | % Unfavour-able | % Non-Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teamwork | Q1 | 85 | 4 | 10 | 1 |
| | Q2 | 56 | 17 | 23 | 4 |
| Employee Involvement | Q3 | 67 | 7 | 25 | 0 |
| | Q4 | 77 | 6 | 15 | 1 |
| | Q5 | 54 | 14 | 30 | 2 |
| Personal Growth | Q6 | 76 | 7 | 16 | 0 |
| | Q7 | 56 | 24 | 19 | 1 |
| | Q8 | 81 | 11 | 7 | 1 |
| | Q9 | 37 | 21 | 42 | 1 |
| | Q10 | 53 | 17 | 30 | 1 |
| | Q11 | 56 | 14 | 29 | 1 |
| Quality of Work Life | Q12 | 56 | 16 | 27 | 1 |
| | Q13 | 69 | 8 | 23 | 0 |
| | Q14 | 73 | 11 | 14 | 1 |
| | Q15 | 41 | 41 | 17 | 1 |
| | Q16 | 78 | 14 | 7 | 1 |
| | Q17 | 74 | 16 | 10 | 1 |
| | Q18 | 52 | 27 | 15 | 6 |
| Workplace Ethics | Q20 | 61 | 15 | 23 | 0 |
| | Q21 | 46 | 21 | 33 | 1 |
| Safety | Q22 | 83 | 6 | 10 | 1 |
| | Q23 | 87 | 6 | 7 | 1 |
| | Q24 | 81 | 5 | 12 | 1 |
| | Q25 | 68 | 7 | 25 | 0 |
| | Q26 | 87 | 7 | 6 | 0 |
| Communica-tions | Q27 | 63 | 15 | 22 | 1 |
| | Q28 | 75 | 13 | 12 | 0 |
| | Q29 | 66 | 13 | 21 | 0 |
| | Q30 | 65 | 11 | 24 | 0 |
| | Q31 | 61 | 10 | 28 | 1 |
| | Q32 | 63 | 15 | 21 | 1 |
| | Q33 | 69 | 19 | 12 | 0 |
| | Q34 | 49 | 29 | 21 | 0 |
| Compensation and Recognition | Q35 | 42 | 9 | 49 | 0 |
| | Q36 | 54 | 13 | 33 | 0 |
| | Q37 | 61 | 12 | 27 | 0 |
| Leadership | Q38 | 79 | 6 | 15 | 0 |
| | Q39 | 43 | 29 | 25 | 3 |
| | Q40 | 45 | 22 | 32 | 1 |
| | Q41 | 49 | 18 | 31 | 1 |
| | Q42 | 37 | 30 | 32 | 1 |

(Note: Q19 was not a scaled question.)

| Category | Question | % Favourable | % Neutral | % Unfavourable | % Non-Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Diversity | Q43 | 56 | 27 | 16 | 1 |
| | Q44 | 70 | 15 | 14 | 1 |
| | Q45 | 53 | 32 | 14 | 1 |
| Recruitment | Q46 | 53 | 20 | 26 | 0 |
| | Q47 | 35 | 23 | 41 | 1 |
| | Q48 | 87 | 7 | 5 | 0 |
| | Q49 | 95 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| | Q50 | 33 | 39 | 28 | 0 |
| Retention | Q51 | 62 | 18 | 19 | 1 |
| | Q52 | 49 | 21 | 31 | 1 |
| | Q53 | 71 | 17 | 11 | 1 |
| | Q54 | 49 | 31 | 18 | 1 |
| | Q55 | 36 | 42 | 23 | 0 |

(Note: Q56 was not a scaled question, and Q50 and Q55 were for managers and supervisors only.)

## Appendix II: Summary of Recommendations

### 1 Commit

Recommendation:

- Leaders should continue to demonstrate their commitment to listening to employees and to finding and implementing solutions.

### 2 Assess

Recommendation:

- Annual performance tracking and assessments should continue to take place to enable the measurement of progress, and any other impacts.
- Performance targets should be incorporated in the 2007 employee survey.
- Survey results should support an on-going internal assessment and provide government an opportunity to track its progress towards achieving goals.
- Government should continue to develop a model of employee engagement that identifies the critical engagement factors to be measured. This model should be incorporated into future surveys.

### 3 Report

Recommendation:

- The release of the results, and the response to the results should be done in a coordinated, timely, inclusive and transparent manner.
- Departments should provide regular reporting of progress to employees.

## 3 Report cont'd

- Where appropriate, government should clearly connect actions/ initiatives that address employee concerns raised through the survey back to the survey results, so employees can see the clear link between their feedback and actions taken.
- Coordinated by a corporate advisory body, a summary progress report should be released to all employees on a semi-annual basis.

## 4 Celebrate

Recommendation:

- Government should celebrate its strengths and continue to build on these areas.

## 5 Learn

Recommendation:

- Where the issue/problem is not clear, further exploration should be conducted prior to any action planning, so that the underlying cause is understood and that the solutions will address the cause. This approach should be clearly conveyed to employees. Activities such as brainstorming sessions, focus groups, best-practice reviews, and/or additional supplementary research, as well as employees' written survey comments, can help highlight some of the root causes of identified issues.
- Departments should engage in additional discussions with employees to provide clarification and to highlight how government might act to address the concerns reported in the employee survey.

## 6 Act

Recommendation:

- Identifying who is accountable for responding and acting upon the results, at both a corporate and department level, and how they are held accountable, should be clearly defined and communicated to employees.
- Employees and management should jointly focus on positive change and action, with employees engaged in developing solutions.
- Departments should be encouraged to act on concerns expressed in the survey and advise the Corporate Advisory Committee of key issues that require an organization-wide response or action.
- Corporately, the survey results should be integrated into the business and strategic planning process throughout government: into the *Corporate Human Resource Plan;* and into the design of new, or re-design of existing, human-resource strategies, policies, programs and services.
- Government should focus on developing solutions for the areas of concern identified in both the 2004 and 2005 surveys — employees' perceptions of:
    - Opportunities for career-advancement;
    - Merit-based hiring practices; and,
    - Survey response and action.

## 7 Career Advancement/Merit-Based Hiring

Recommendation:

- Policies/guidelines should be developed to ensure fair access to developmental assignments and projects.

## 7 Career Advancement/Merit-Based Hiring cont'd

- Managers and supervisors should be held accountable, through performance goals, to support career development and learning plans for their employees throughout the performance management process.

- Departments should ensure that managers and supervisors are provided with the support needed to assist employees in developing learning and career-development plans.

- Employees should be informed of available supports regarding career advancement and growth, as well as the process for succession management.

- The Public Service Commission should continue to monitor government's compliance to the fair hiring guidelines and policy. Review or audit recommendations should be reviewed and acted upon.

- Further exploration should be conducted to better understand the factors that are contributing to employees' negative perceptions of career-advancement opportunities. This survey question should be expanded to ask employees what they perceive as barriers to career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia.

## 8 Senior Management Resolving Issues Raised in the Surveys

Recommendation:

Implementing the recommendations made in this report will help address employees' concerns.

# Appendix III

## Instructions and Survey Instrument

How's Work Going?

# Instructions
## 2005 Employee Survey

**Please complete and return the survey by March 7, 2005.**

The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Completed surveys should be returned in the enclosed, stamped, addressed envelope. Please do not put your name or other personal information on the survey. Your answers are anonymous and confidential.

Each question contains two answer categories; please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement, and how important the topic is to you as an employee. Please mark your answer clearly by placing a check mark ✓ or **X** in the answer box. As an example:

| | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **1** I have access to training opportunities | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | | ✓ |

If you *neither agree nor disagree* with the statement, you would select answer 3 in the "Level of Agreement" section. If you feel that having access to training opportunities is *critical* to you, then you would select answer 5 in the "Level of Importance" section.

Please note that if your answer appears to be between two answer choices, the answer choice that is ***higher*** will be recorded and used for statistical analysis. As an example:

| | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **1** I have access to training opportunities | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | ✓ |

In this example, your answer choice in the "Level of Agreement" section would be recorded as 3, *neither agree nor disagree*.

If you require alternate formats for this survey or if you have any questions, please contact:

Carrie Hotton, 902-424-6655 hottonca@gov.ns.ca, or Lisa Palermo, 902-424-6456 palermml@gov.ns.ca.

Thank you for participating! To learn more about the Government of Nova Scotia's employee surveys, please visit the website: www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey

# How's Work Going?

## 2005 EMPLOYEE SURVEY

**What you think about your work environment matters! Fill out this survey and have your say to help make the Nova Scotia public service the best it can be**

- In 2004, Government committed to regularly ask you for your input about the work environment. As part of this process, you have been randomly selected as part of a representative sample of our employee group to participate in this survey.
- Asking you for your input about the work environment is a fundamental part of building a strong public service in Nova Scotia.
- The information collected from this survey will help make improvements in your work environment, provide information that will be used in business, strategic, and program planning, and will assist evaluation and audit, communications, and human resources management activities.
- You will see the results of the survey- the results will be analyzed over the winter and made available to you in the summer.
- The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
- This project is managed by the Public Service Commission's Evaluation and Audit division.

**Please complete the employee survey and return it in the addressed, stamped envelope provided.**

NOVA SCOTIA
Public Service Commission

For more information on this project, go to http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey

**Teamwork** - In this section, we are asking questions regarding your immediate workgroup.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | The people I work with make an effort to help each other out | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Shared goals are developed for my workgroup | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Employee Involvement** - In this section, we are asking questions regarding your level of involvement in the workplace.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I am given an opportunity to provide input on decisions that affect my job | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | My supervisor considers my work-related ideas | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | I can provide input into decisions that are made in my Department | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Personal Growth** - In this section, we are asking you questions about personal growth, which includes learning and career development.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | I have access to training opportunities | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | I am encouraged to share what I have learned with others in my workgroup | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | I can apply what I have learned in my training to my job | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | I have opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | I get the training and related support I need to support my continuous learning | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | I have opportunities to participate in assignments/projects in my department that allow me to expand and develop new skills. | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Quality of Work Life** - In this section, we are asking you questions about the quality of your work life.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | I am provided with support to balance my work and personal/family life | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | I have the tools, equipment, support, and information I need to do my job well | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | I can balance the demands of my work life with the demands of my personal/family life | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | My work environment is supportive of my involvement in community/volunteer activities | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | I am familiar with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | I know how to contact EAP for assistance | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | I would feel comfortable using EAP services | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | If I experience stress, it is most often due to the following factors: **(select all that apply)** | ❑ Job demands<br>❑ Supervisor demands<br>❑ Work environment<br>❑ Family<br>❑ Personal<br>❑ Other | | | | | | | | | | |

**Workplace Ethics** - In this section, we are asking you questions about workplace ethics.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20 | I know where I can go for help (the process) to resolve workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | I can report concerns related to workplace ethical dilemmas or conflicts without fear of reprisal | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Safety** - In this section, we are asking you questions regarding safety in your workplace.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22 | My Department creates a safe work environment for its employees | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | I feel safe working in my job | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | I have not experienced harassment (sexual, racial) behavior in my workplace | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | I have not experienced bullying behavior in my workplace | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | I know who the Occupational Health and Safety representatives are for my work area | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Communications** - In this section, we are asking questions regarding communications in your workplace.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27 | I received communications about our Department's business plan in the past 12 months | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28 | I know how my work contributes to our Department's priorities/ purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | I receive the communications that I need to do my job well | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | My supervisor gives me feedback about my work performance | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 31 | I participate in an annual performance appraisal/ review with my supervisor | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 32 | Work-related information is shared within my Department | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33 | I received communications regarding the results of last year's Government-wide employee survey | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | I am aware of Government's corporate values | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Compensation and Recognition** - In this section, we are asking questions regarding your compensation, and the recognition you receive in your job.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35 | I am compensated fairly for my job | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | I feel valued for my contributions at work | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 37 | I receive recognition from my supervisor for a job well done | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Leadership** - In this section, we are asking you questions regarding leadership in your Department.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38 | I can talk openly with my supervisor about my work | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 39 | The senior leaders *(comprised of: Deputy Ministers, Assistant/Associate Deputy Ministers, CEOs, Directors and Executive Directors)* in my Department set a good example for employees | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | I have confidence in my Department's senior leaders | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41 | My supervisor manages conflict in my workgroup | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | Senior Management will try to resolve issues raised by employees in this survey | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Diversity** - In this section, we are asking you questions about diversity in your workplace. Diversity refers to differences in abilities, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, and physical characteristics.

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Sure | | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 43 | The Government of Nova Scotia demonstrates its commitment to diversity in the workplace | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 44 | Employees in my Department are respectful of employee differences | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 45 | My Department values diversity | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Recruitment** - In this section, we are asking you questions about recruitment (attracting employees to work in the Government of Nova Scotia). *In question 50, if you are not a manager of staff, please select answer option 0- Don't Know/Not Applicable.*

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Applicable | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46 | I would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as one of the best places to work in my community | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 47 | Hiring in the Government of Nova Scotia is based on merit | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Employees have access to job postings within the Government of Nova Scotia | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | I have the required qualifications to meet the needs of my job | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | As a manager of staff, I can attract and recruit the people I need in order to achieve my division/department goals | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Retention** - In this section, we are asking you questions about retention (keeping employees that work in the Government of Nova Scotia). *In question 55, if you are not a manager of staff, please select answer option 0- Don't Know/Not Applicable.*

| | | Level of Agreement | | | | | | Level of Importance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know/ Not Applicable | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Important | Very Important | Critical |
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51 | I see a future for my career, working for the Government of Nova Scotia | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 52 | Even if offered a similar job with slightly higher pay elsewhere in my community, I would stay with the Government of Nova Scotia | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 53 | I am proud to work as a public servant | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 54 | I work for an effective organization, in other words, my Department regularly achieves the goals set out in our business plan | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | As a manager of staff, I can retain (keep) the people I need in order to achieve my division/department goals | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 56 | I intend to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia for: **(please choose only 1 response)** | ❑ Less than 2 years<br>❑ Between 3-5 years<br>❑ Between 6-10 years<br>❑ 11 years or more<br>❑ I intend to retire within the next 5 years | | | | | | | | | | |

## Demographic Questions

Your answers to these questions will help us to interpret, sort, and analyze our data and to determine our results. **Please select only one answer to each question.**

### My Department or PSE/Agency/Commission:

Please identify your home Department as your Department. As an example, if you work for the Justice CSU, you would select Justice as your Department.

- ❑ Agriculture and Fisheries
- ❑ Communications Nova Scotia
- ❑ Community Services
- ❑ Education
- ❑ Environment and Labour
- ❑ Finance
- ❑ Health and the Office of Health Promotion
- ❑ Justice
- ❑ Natural Resources
- ❑ Office of Economic Development
- ❑ Public Prosecution Service
- ❑ Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
- ❑ Tourism, Culture and Heritage
- ❑ Transportation and Public Works

**Or, one of the following:**

- ❑ Aboriginal Affairs, Acadian Affairs, African Nova Scotian Affairs, Executive Council Office, Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of the Premier, Public Service Commission, Treasury Policy Board, Voluntary Planning
- ❑ Emergency Measures Organization, Energy, FOIPOP Review Office, Human Rights Commission, NSAC Research, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Nova Scotia Police Commission, Nova Scotia Securities Commission, Nova Scotia Utilities and Review Board, Office of the Auditor General, Senior Citizens Secretariat, Sydney Tar Ponds Agency, Workers Compensation Appeal Tribunal
- ❑ Election Expenses, Government House, Legislative Expenses, Office of the Legislative Counsel, Office of the Speaker

### My Geographic Work Location:

- ❑ HRM (Halifax Regional Municipality)
- ❑ Regional

### My Age:

- ❑ 29 years of age or younger
- ❑ 30-39 years of age
- ❑ 40-49 years of age
- ❑ 50-54 years of age
- ❑ 55 years of age or older

### My Years of Employment Experience in the Government of Nova Scotia:

- ❑ Fewer than 2 years
- ❑ 2-5 years
- ❑ 6-10 years
- ❑ 11-20 years
- ❑ 20 years or more

### My Gender:

- ❑ Male
- ❑ Female

### My Educational Background:

- ❑ Less than grade XII
- ❑ Grade XII or equivalent
- ❑ Post secondary (college, university)

**I am a member of the following groups: Aboriginal persons, racially visible persons, persons with disabilities (voluntary self-identification)**

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If you answered yes, please check the following:

- ❑ Aboriginal persons
- ❑ Racially visible persons
- ❑ Persons with disabilities

**My Job Level:**

- ❑ Staff (no supervisory or management responsibilities)
- ❑ Supervisory (Team Lead, Supervisor, Foreman)
- ❑ Management (Project Manager, Program Manager, Manager, Director, Executive Director, Assistant Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister)

**My Pay Plan:**

- ❑ PR- Professional
- ❑ TE- Technical
- ❑ CL- Clerical
- ❑ MCP- Management Compensation Plan
- ❑ AS- Administrative Support
- ❑ CUPE Local 1867 (Department of Transportation and Public Works, Highway Workers)
- ❑ NSGEU Local 480 (Department of Justice, Adult Corrections)
- ❑ **Others, such as:**
  - CA- Crown Attorneys
  - EDC- Education
  - HSA or HSB- Health Services
  - HSN- Health Services, Nursing
  - MOS- Maintenance and Operational Services
  - MS- Medical Services
  - PPS- Public Prosecution Service
  - PS- Pathologists and Scientists
  - SCA- Senior Crown Attorneys
  - SCC- Senior Crown Counsel
  - SE- Services
  - TRS- Treasury Services

**My Comments:**

**Thank you for completing the survey!**
**Please return completed surveys in the enclosed, addressed, stamped envelope.**